Trials of a Staff Officer

By Captain Charles King

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TRIALS

OF

A STAFF-OFFICER.

BY

CAPT. CHARLES KING,

AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," ETC.

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PREFACE.

ODD experiences fall to the lot of every soldier. Even the subaltern who has spent the quarter of a century since the great surrender in plodding around after a platoon—and such has been the stagnation of promotion that the case is by no means imaginary—can tell of queer times in the reconstruction days; of cheerful *badinage* with mobs of women in the Brooklyn "Whisky War" when the troops were sent down to help the marshals break up illicit distilleries; of rural hospitalities as they tramped through Pennsylvania during the big strike of '77; of perilous days on the Indian frontier; even of out-of-the-way sensations in out-of-the-way garrisons; but, take it all in all, a junior in the line is apt to find life more or less monotonous. To break this he might well be tempted to try other duty; but it is certain that, were it all to be done over again with the view of seeking the path wherein life might be most placidly enjoyed, nothing would tempt the present writer to quit the shelter of his tactical two yards from the rear rank for any staff position, unaccompanied by rank and emolument, the army could offer. Indeed, but for certain experiences gained, characters encountered, and scenes visited, "Mr. X." would be inclined to think he had made a big mistake in ever allowing himself to be assigned to other than troop duty, and nothing but the fact that he had been mercifully endowed with the faculty of seeing

the humorous side of a scrape enabled him to get through some of those hereinafter referred to without an attack of nervous prostration. That he escaped that blow entirely is due to the consummate good luck which enabled him to steer clear of the one military maelstrom which would have swamped him utterly: He never had to be post quartermaster; though the mere fact of his having been ordered to temporarily take charge of the office of a sick comrade nearly resulted in his being proclaimed a felon.

The trouble now is that, on looking over these sketches,—many of them written years ago,—Mr. X. is confronted with the fact that they fall far short of making those old-time "Trials" half as whimsical as they seem to him. With the best intentions in the world, and a readiness to undertake any duty or responsibility his superiors might unload on him, it must be seen that his capacity for getting into snarls and tangles was simply illimitable. The smallest item of rashness was cocksure to develop into a mammoth of consequences when least expected. Who could have predicted that, when the judge-advocate of the court signed the memorandum receipt for stationery handed him by the quartermaster's clerk at Jackson Barracks in '72, he was bringing upon himself a direful communication to reach him two years later when he lay wounded and helpless in far-away Arizona, and to say that his pay would be stopped if he did not immediately proceed to account for the following quartermaster's property, for which he was responsible, —to wit:

One Inkstand.

Mr. X. remembered that inkstand well. He had been the aide-de-camp who overhauled some of the bids for

stationery, and this particular inkstand was a blown-glass affair, about one inch in height, one and one-half inches across the base, and of a capacity of perhaps one-quarter thimble. They were furnished at a price of something in the neighborhood of six cents a gross, and were such a nuisance that the post quartermaster had determined to get rid of them at all hazards. So he unloaded one or more on every board or court that met at the barracks, and dropped the same number from his papers. Here, of course, is where the trouble comes in. One can "expend" pens, ink, paper, etc., but cannot so get rid of what is only an inkstand in name. *That* must be taken up on regular papers and accounted for monthly,—at least it had to be in '72–'74. The fact that this particular inkstand was expended before the court was sworn—at the expense of a vagrant cat on a neighboring wall—has no bearing on the case. Mr. X. never thought of the brittle little box as a factor of possible magnitude in his future, but it seems the Quartermaster's Department at Washington got riled at him for not making out a dollar's worth of papers for a mill's worth of goods,—thought him recalcitrant when he wasn't thinking of that business at all, but chasing Apaches for all he was worth, and so in his hour of need the blow fell. Fortunately there was a department commander to interpose betwixt him and the deluge.

And then, talking of department commanders, who would have supposed that, when the genial and kindly chief of the Missouri, one stormy March morning in '76, absolutely forbade Mr. X.'s attempting to proceed from head-quarters to a Western post with his wife and child, and declared, "Never mind your leave expiring to-

morrow; we'll fix that here," that Mr. X. was piling up trouble again? We got to Riley a day late. Four months afterwards, X. and his regiment—cut off from all communication—were far up on the Rosebud, in Montana. For two weeks he had had no news from the dear ones at the distant Kansas post: the last news was bad. His heart was full of anxiety, yet leaped with eagerness when the word was passed that Jack Crawford, "the Poet Scout," had made a daring ride of it all by himself, had come out from Fetterman to join our scouts, and had brought the mail. "Anything for me, Jack?" pleaded X., breaking in upon the group of letter-reading officers. "Yes! One!" An official letter, big and portentous. An announcement that, for absence without leave for one day, Mr. X.'s pay would be stopped accordingly. Only this and nothing more. No telegram, no backward mail,—no consideration for the fellows cut off in the Indian country. Nothing to do but grin and bear it, and swear until the campaign was well-nigh over.

Then X. got reported absent without leave, and had his pay stopped while actually traveling on duty with the general to whom he had been assigned as aide-de-camp. He had to go down in his pockets and pay for a raft of signal property he had never seen nor heard of, because he was ass enough to receipt to a fellow up in the Black Hills, who subsequently wrote that the names given some of the items were wrong, and he begged to submit the proper names. X. took up the "proper names" on his papers, and confidingly wrote to the chief signal officer of the mistake and said he would drop the old names from his return. The chief signal officer (as represented by the lamented Howgate) responded forthwith that there could

be no possible objection to Mr. X.'s taking up the new names; indeed, he would be *expected* to; but as to dropping the old ones, he would do nothing of the kind—nor did he—until paid for.

And then there was that matter of—— But here! The next thing Mr. X. knows he will be telling what is is in the pages that follow, to which the soldier reader—no one else could wade through them—is respectfully referred.

TRIALS OF A STAFF-OFFICER.

THE ADJUTANT.

JUST when our staff duties began is perhaps a matter of no importance. Major Sanger's comprehensive essay on "The Duties of Staff-Officers" had not then been written, but we had known that accomplished officer when he himself was adjutant, and had unhesitatingly adopted his system as one worthy of imitation. That was a great many years ago; orders, regulations, customs of service, and the tactics of the three arms have undergone important changes; but so long as human nature remains as it is and has been since creation, so long will there be mistakes in the best-regulated families and stumbling-blocks for the most level-headed officials, civil or military.

In the course of ten years it was our luck to encounter experiences varied if not valuable. We had been adjutant for a dozen different C. O.'s in every section of the country; aide-de-camp to more than one pair of stars; had acted as head of all kinds of bureaus, as adjutant and inspector-general, engineer, judge-advocate, military secretary, ordnance and signal officer, quartermaster, commissary, even as chaplain and surgeon, and with the profound conviction that our own shortcomings were many, there is grafted in our inner consciousness the belief that were a man possessed of the energy and snap

of Sanger himself, the "paper knowledge" of Leonard Hay, the legal acumen of Gardner, the patience of Wilhelm, the reticence of Horace Porter, the energy of Nickerson, the courtesy of Audenreid, the buried pen of "Perfect" Bliss, and the imperturbability of "Bob" Williams, yet would he find at some time or other a combination of circumstances against which no experience could make him armor-proof, and of which the linesman *pur et simple* has no conception whatsoever.

We all know what the adjutant should be,—a soldier in everything, in carriage, form, voice, and manner, the soul of parade and guard-mounting, the reliable authority on tactics and regulations, the patient student of general orders, the rigid scrutinizer of returns and rolls, the scholarly man of the subalterns, the faithful adherent and executive in spirit and in letter of the commanding officer. We all know how easy it is to formulate rules and regulations for his guidance on all matters of duty and routine in garrison,—we all know just what day the regimental return should reach Washington, the post return department head-quarters, the company papers the adjutant's office, but until we have tried to "run" the head-quarters of a frontier post and of a cavalry regiment in the heart of the Indian country, and the height of Indian campaigning, we have not, and Sanger had not, the faintest conception of the trials of staff-officers as exemplified in the case of the adjutant.

Fancy, if you can, a regiment situated just as we were on the 1st day of June, 187–. Six of the twelve companies scouting about on the Southern plains, the other six waiting for their turn, the colonel and adjutant off on leave, the lieutenant-colonel and quartermaster "running

the regiment," and all of a sudden a big Indian war breaks out far to the north, and head-quarters with ten companies are hurried off to re-enforce another department, and from that day to the 15th of November not a glimpse do we catch of desks or papers. Colonel, adjutant, and everybody is in the field in active pursuit of a still more active foe, and not a return has been made in all those months. Winter setting in, we are ordered to a post near the railway, and the colonel hands the adjutant a bundle of letters, all harping upon the same string. The adjutant-general of the army informs the commanding officer, in the final communication of *his* series, that the returns of the regiment for the months of May, June, July, August, September, etc., have not been received. "Your attention has been repeatedly called to the neglect," etc. (We got them in a bunch at the end of the campaign, but, being happily cut off from all mail communication during the summer, were spared the consecutive infliction of letter after letter at the time.) "You will at once render the required returns, with such explanation as you may be able to give," etc. And with the official expression of the proper amount of astonishment and indignation at such apparent disregard of instructions, the adjutant-general winds up with the customary information that he is the obedient servant of the colonel whom he has been flagellating.

Opening the next series, we find a similar array of monthly remonstrances from the adjutant-general of the department from which we were sent in June. "For temporary service in the Department of the ——" was the language of the order by which we were hurried away, and though every vestige of the regiment is now

far removed from his jurisdiction, the commanding officer of our former field is jealously tenacious of his rights over us, and he too demands reports and returns, expresses his censure of our negligence in fitting terms, and, being debarred from remonstrating with our new department commander for our illegal detention, now that the war is over, takes it out in rasping our colonel.

Then the adjutant-general of the Department of the ——, whom we have been "re-enforcing," takes his innings, and though one would suppose that his knowledge of our long isolation among the hostiles and separation from all baggage would prompt him to consideration, he bowls us over as remorselessly as the others.

Finally, the adjutant-general of the division delivers his fire, and to all appearances it would seem as though not the faintest realization of our actual condition had been vouchsafed to any one of these amiable autocrats, but that from the hazy distance of Washington or Chicago, through fragrant clouds of Havana smoke, from the sitting-point of easy office-chairs, those gentlemen, gazing dreamily over roof and spire, beheld us in uninterrupted possession of our desks and retained papers, and with certainly nothing better to do than make out new ones. We haven't had time to unpack an inkstand; the mud of the Yellowstone is clinging to our horses' fetlocks; but the colonel unloads a trunkful of papers, and, with a brisk, "There, Mr. X., get all this straightened out as quick as possible," goes off to set his own house in order, and when he reappears it is with a draft of an order showing what he means to do towards straighten ing out the regiment. There is no question but that it needs it. For years past it has been little else than an

agglomeration of companies; every captain has run his machine to suit himself; no two company commanders adopted the same system; drills, except by company mounted, were unknown; and of the forms of parade, the intricacies of battalion movements, the nicer "points" of sentinel duty, the command was in absolute ignorance. Four hundred recruits had joined, and the confusion was chaotic; but we had a new colonel, he had a new adjutant, both meant business, and the grind began.

Reveille, 5.30 A.M. Breakfast immediately after. Stables, 6 A.M. Sick-call and fatigue, 7.30. Boots and saddles for morning parade, 8 A.M. (mounted and in full dress). Adjutant's call, 8.20. Guard-mounting (mounted) immediately after parade. Drill-call (battalion drill, mounted), 10.15. Recall, 11.45. Dinner, 12 M. Squad drill of recruits, 1.15 to 2.15 P.M. Company drill (dismounted), 2.30 to 3.30 P.M. Stables, 4 to 5.15. Retreat and evening dress-parade (dismounted), sunset. Recitations of officers, Monday evening; of non-commissioned officers, Tuesdays and Fridays. Tattoo, 9 P.M.

Now, the colonel meant to have things vigorously carried out, and started in himself by receiving the reveille reports in person, one officer superintending the roll-call of each company, and the adjutant that of the band and non-commissioned staff. Then everybody—colonel, major, adjutant, quartermaster, and band—went to stables morning and evening; and it may be stated that there was some growling among the company officers at least, arising from the fact that their unoccupied hours were few. But we are portraying experiences in the adjutant's duties merely, and therefore return to him.

The duties of this functionary outside of his office

began at first call for reveille, when he sleepily arose and arrayed himself in stable-dress; made his way through the darkness to the band-quarters, some four hundred yards away; watched the roll-call of his "wind-jammers;" then hunted up the colonel on parade, reported to him, and between reveille and stables had time to swallow a cup of coffee, and then see to it that the orderly trumpeter sounded stable-call sharp on time. It happened once or twice that those graceless young imps, the regimental trumpeters, would delay the call to give the men or themselves more time at breakfast, and the colonel ruled that the adjutant was responsible. Somebody had to be, and why not the adjutant?

From his office then the adjutant tramped down to the stables in the creek valley, six hundred yards away, and gave his attention to the grooming of his thirty-odd elderly grays, the "mount" of the musicians and non-commissioned staff, and on completion of this duty he returned to the office in time to see sick-call sounded, start the clerks at their work, then hurry to his quarters for the change from his strongly-scented stable-rig to bath, then full-dress uniform, and his own breakfast before the sound of "boots and saddles" at eight should summon him to the saddle. Morning parade over, all other officers except the old and new officers of the day had time to get home and throw off helmet and double-breasted coats; the adjutant, however, had to hold on for a long guard-mounting and a passage in review at walk and trot before he could do likewise. It was generally 9.15 to 9.30 before ceremonies were over; then he had barely time to change to "undress," rush to the office, and find his desk loaded down with papers of every kind, when drill-call

would sound, and from then until noon he and his horse would be in a lather in the rapid movements required of them at battalion drill. From 1 to 2 he, with most of the other officers, had to attend recruit drill; and, provided he was willing to give up all idea of lunch or dinner, the hours unoccupied by out-door duties in which he could hope to straighten out those papers were from 2 to 4 P.M., at which latter hour he was again summoned to stable.

With seven months' returns of every kind in arrears, with his desk littered with the routine papers of the day, with more than two hours' work in getting the morning reports, sick reports, ration returns, and requisitions for forage, straw, salt, etc., to fit into one another; with all the passes, applications for boards of survey, extra duty men, hospital cooks and attendants, fatigue details, letters to officers requiring explanation why, etc., endorsements on a hundred different papers, company returns to be scrutinized, colonel's letters to head-quarters of the department, and the adjutant-general's orders, details, countersigns, etc., etc., the adjutant had far more than enough to fill every moment of those two hours without that hideous incubus of seven months' papers in arrears. The first thing that occurred to him was to ask the colonel for more clerks,—he only had three; the last thing that occurred to him was to ask the colonel for more time. If the truth be told, the adjutant was as intent on the "setting up" of the six companies on duty at head-quarters as was the colonel himself, and thought papers a somewhat secondary consideration to getting the men (and officers) up to a thorough tactical proficiency; he did not *want* to be excused from a single military duty.

It was gall and wormwood to his soul to mark the slouchy carriage of the men, their clumsy salute, and the utter lack of steadiness in their ranks. It was exasperating to see the blunders of the non-commissioned officers for the first week of guard-mounting, and with all his might he started in to straighten things out. His theory was, that in order to get the men up to the standard the non-commissioned officers must be thoroughly instructed, but the colonel held the captains responsible for this, and, as bad luck would have it, every captain had individual ideas of his own to instil into the minds of his sergeants, as a consequence of which six totally different systems prevailed; each captain thought his the best, and was fiercely jealous of anything that savored of interference.

The colonel required weekly reports from his company commanders of the proficiency of their non-commissioned officers, and established a system of marks by which he could judge of their relative merit. This seemed all right to the one West Pointer among the captains, was looked upon as a nuisance by some of the others, and absolutely denounced by one of the very best company commanders in the regiment, on the ground that "it reflected on the intelligence and faithfulness of the captain to require a report from him." It was simply marvelous to see into how many meanings the simple language of the tactics could be distorted, and how obstinately the adherent of each particular interpretation maintained the correctness of his theory. The recitations of the officers to the colonel had developed the fact that, as a rule, the higher the rank the less the knowledge of the subject; but then, as Captain Canker

remarked, "These West Pointers retain their school-boy habits, while we men who were educated in the school of war itself are not accustomed to this sort of nursery talk." And, as for the men, it may be said that in the saddle they didn't do badly, but when it came to foot-parades, guard-mounts and the like, "It was d——d dough-boy work, and they hadn't 'listed in the cavalry for such." However, the colonel was bound to have dismounted parades, and the adjutant was bound to help him. It was ordered that for dismounted duty the sabre should not be worn, and the command should appear armed with the carbine alone.

The first evening dress-parade was as chock-full of errors as it could well be. Nothing could induce the guides to quit their positions in ranks and come out on the line. Captains Canker and Curbit in the right wing looked daggers at the adjutant (who finally had to drag the bewildered first sergeants where they belonged), then dressed their companies to the wrong flank. Captain Munger faced along the line instead of to the front as he aligned his men (and never could be brought to do it any other way afterwards), and Captain Snaffle savagely ordered a marker to "get out of the way of his company," to the great perplexity of that functionary, who had been ordered by the adjutant not to budge until the command "guides posts!" In opening ranks, Captain Canker, whose company was on the extreme right, almost refused to dress up on line with his lieutenant, who commanded the first platoon, and was heard expressing deep indignation at the idea of a lieutenant, if he *was* adjutant, being permitted to give orders on parade to his superior officers. The "present arms"

was fair, except that only half the officers (the younger half) executed the first motion at the command, "Present!" The manual was worried through after a fashion, and then the adjutant came marching in to receive the reports. As he glanced along the line to see what the first sergeants looked like, he was struck by the variety. The first sergeant of the first company, armed with the carbine, was standing at an order on the extreme right; the second company's sergeant, armed with a sabre, was standing at a carry; the third company's sergeant was resting the point of his sabre on the ground, like the officers; fourth company, sabre at a carry; fifth company, sabre point down; sixth company, sabre point up. The adjutant made mental note of it and of the intricacies that followed. At the command "*First sergeants!*" one of the down-pointed sabres came up, but the others and the carbine on the right remained immovable. At "*To the front and centre!*" five of the sergeants stepped to the front, some one, some two yards, but the man on the right held his ground. In response to a sharp "What are you waiting for, sergeant of first company?" from the adjutant, he shambled out (and subsequently explained that he was waiting for the command "March!"), but so perturbed in spirit that he forgot the result of the company roll-call. At "*Report!*" the six officials expressed themselves as follows:

"Company 'O,' present or accounted for, *Sir.*"

"Company 'R,' all present or accounted for."

"'T' company, present or accounted for, *Sir.*"

"'U' company, all present, *Sir.*"

"*Sir!* two privates are absent."

"'X' company, all are present, sir."

Not one of them had hit on the right form.

At "*First sergeants to your posts!*" every blessed one of those sergeants faced outwards, and when they finally retook their positions in line two of them did so by turning round and backing into position, one by facing to the left about, and only two by marching through their interval to the required yard and then executing the about face.

And yet that night, when the colonel announced at officers' recitation that the adjutant had criticisms to make at the expense of all the first sergeants, four of the captains were ready to bet that theirs had made no mistake, and the junior captain announced that he had spent an hour instructing his sergeant that day, and knew *his* couldn't have gone wrong.

The adjutant, being given the floor, proceeded to state his case, but it was a characteristic of officers' recitation in the —*th* that no man was allowed to express his views uninterrupted. There were always six or eight who burst into the most carefully-prepared opinion and complicated affairs to the uttermost; consequently, long before the discussion which ensued on the very first issue was half over, tattoo sounded and the convention adjourned without decision, but the adjutant's "points" were these:

1st. The men being armed with the carbine, the first sergeants should have been similarly equipped. The tactics clearly indicate such intention in paragraph 1129 (dress-parade, dismounted). Here the captains to a man opposed him. No cavalry first sergeant was ever intended to carry a carbine, and the eventual decision of the colonel sustained the captains. In all subsequent parades of the

—*th* the first sergeants marched with drawn sabre on the right of a line of carbines.*

2d. No first sergeant should drop the point of his sabre at "*Order arms!*" only officers and non-commissioned staff-officers being mentioned in paragraph 1075.

3d. At "*To the front and centre!*" all first sergeants should step two yards to front and face to centre.

4th. At "*Report!*" nothing but the language of the tactics, and *exactly* that, should be employed, as, for instance:

"Company 'A' present, or accounted for." Or,

"Company 'A,' two privates absent."

("Well, that's just what Sergeants Finnegan, Brannigan, O'Grady, etc., said," was here heard from several company commanders.)

5th. At "*To your posts!*" not a man should stir, but wait for "*March!*" before facing outwards. Captains Curbit and Munger thought such tactics simply ridiculous. If the sergeants were not to move until "*March!*" returning to their posts, they should not budge until "*March!*" when coming to the front and centre. The adjutant retorted with some asperity that he was not there to defend the tactics,—no man suffered more on their account than he did,—but he proposed to carry them out to the letter, whether nonsensical or not. Here Captain Snaffle sailed into the adjutant with, "You talk about sticking to tactics, and yesterday morning, by Jinks! you 'mounted' my best sergeant for not facing his platoon when wheeling marching in review at guard-mounting!"

"Of course I did," says the adjutant. "We've hammered that point flat long ago. Look at paragraph 278, 'Cavalry Tactics.'"

* Eventually changed "by order."

"I don't care," says Snaffle. "General Coach decided that sergeants should not face their platoons, and they were all drilled so until you became adjutant."

"True enough; but the colonel, not the lieutenant-colonel, commands us now, and that isn't the only point changed by the pageful."

Then another captain concludes it time to give *his* dig. He and the adjutant have been pretty close friends, but it is a case of company commanders *vs.* the staff, and though in his innermost heart he agrees with the latter on all points thus far, he sees that the adjutant stands alone, and so has the political sense to join the heavy majority.

"Well, *I'll* tell you what you do in violation of tactics X.: you march the guard in review at undress guard-mounting."

(Chorus of captains: "Yes, I was just going to speak of that," etc.)

To which the sorely-assailed exponent of the modern customs of service responds that in the first place the adjutant is apt to do pretty much as the officer of the day directs in the matter of marching in review, but, to come down to a matter of fact, there had not been an undress guard-mounting since their arrival.

"Mr. X.," says the captain, oracularly, "it has been undress guard-mounting every day this week."

The adjutant begins to see the drift of his argument, so he questions,—

"The weather has been bright and clear, has it not?"

"Granted."

"We have had the band out every day, and it has played for everything, including a long inspection and 'troop,' has it not?"

"Very true."

"The officer of the day *directed* the guard to be marched in review, didn't he?"

"Probably."

"Then how was it undress guard-mounting, and why shouldn't we march in review?"

"*Because the men wore overcoats!*"

Somehow or other in the dead silence that follows this announcement the captain becomes conscious of the fact that the donning of a winter uniform in these high latitudes does not necessarily prohibit the observance of the forms and ceremonies included in the tactics, and adds,—

"At least, that's always been my idea of undress guard-mounting."

But the snickering of some of the juniors and the ominous silence of his adherents of the moment before induce the captain to believe he had put his foot in it.

Finally, it was decided by the colonel that in order to insure a thorough and uniform system of instruction of the non-commissioned officers on all "points" in the ceremonies, duties of guards, sentinels, and the like, the non-commissioned officers of the garrison should assemble one night a week and be "lectured" by the adjutant, who would decide all questions on which there might be a variance of opinion and instruction among the men. This proved a success. Within a fortnight the parades and guard-mountings, so far as the sergeants and corporals were concerned, went off without a flaw. It is true that there was deep-rooted and openly-expressed objection on the part of several of the company commanders, who appeared to regard their sergeants as a species of personal property over whom no one else

ought to have any jurisdiction; and some of them went so far as to declare that they could have nothing more to do with the recitations of their men if such interference was to be tolerated; but one of the most uncompromisingly jealous of these gentlemen, having availed himself of the colonel's hint that he would be glad to have any of the officers visit the adjutant's school, and having sat a silent but deeply-interested listener to all that transpired through two evenings, fairly took the adjutant's breath away by accosting him with—

"I've been a determined opposer of yours, X., in all this matter, but I say to you that this ends my last objection. It's a capital thing, and I shall take occasion to say to every other company commander what I think of it."

And he did, and, whether owing to this fact or not, things began to work smoothly. There was always a crowd to see guard-mounting, and eager, critical eyes to watch those six details as they came dancing out in double time. The utmost pride began to be manifested by the non-commissioned officers in the sharp, soldierly style in which the ceremony was conducted, and from the moment the call sounded to the last notes of the band after marching in review the strongest rivalry was visible between the companies, and almost every bright morning the chevron-wearers of the garrison, to a man, could be seen grouped about the barrack side of the parade closely watching every move and fiercely anathematizing the faintest display of awkwardness on the part of their comrades.

Finally, our guard-mounting began to be a source of pride to everybody, and visiting officers were always

hauled out to see it. Occasionally there would be some "*soi-disant*" authority on tactics from another post who had to have his say if he belonged to the regiment; and as the adjutant never had an instant of time to devote to discussion, he generally succeeded in impressing everybody with the idea that he was an ill-tempered brute at best.

"Say, X.," said one of these gentry one bright morning as the adjutant was hurrying through the knot of officers always grouped about the office after guard-mounting, "hold on a moment; I want to ask you something. Won't detain you a minute."

"Blaze away, then, captain; I have no spare time."

"Well," and here the critic threw open his blouse, inserted his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and glanced impressively round upon the listening group, "what I want to remark is this: you run a very fair guard-mounting here,—I'll admit that; I don't know that I ever saw anything much better" (he had never seen more than a dozen files mounted in his life, and our guard comprised forty-eight men),—"but you don't have enough variety about it; you do the same thing over and over again. Now, at *our* post," etc., etc.

"Very probably you *do* introduce varieties at your post, captain, but where do you find them in the tactics?"

"Well, Mr. X., you might make some little changes: for instance, after your guard passes the officer of the day it always wheels into line to the left and then 'fours right,' you know. Now, we make all manner of pretty changes there." (Chorus of "Yes, that's so. I've wondered you didn't think of that.") And the critical captain smiles patronizingly on the adjutant, who had been

mounting guards long before this interrogator had stepped into his first commission.

The adjutant is certainly testy and snappish: "Just look in your tactics, and you'll *possibly* be able to grasp the reason why we don't indulge in varieties on that point," and brushes past.

Gradually they grew to let the staff alone where matters of that description were concerned, but all the time, day after day, innumerable points were coming up, in which the universal custom was to sling metaphorical bricks at the adjutant, as though he were to blame. Who ever served at a post where the head-quarters clock was not the fruitful if undeserving source of half the lates and absences of the garrison? What officer of the day who hurries out at the last moment buckling his waist-belt on the run does not calumniate the adjutant and declare he had purposely set that clock ahead ten minutes, when but a moment before the old officer of the day was swearing over guard-mounting's being ten minutes behind time and he was in a hurry to get to town? And then the band at parade! Even as Captain Curbit was assailing the adjutant after dismissal of parade over the slow time played in marching out, swearing that a three-legged stool couldn't keep step to such a grind, would not Captain Snaffle rush up like an explosion with "Look here, X.! By Jinks! there wasn't a man in my company could keep step marching in; it was fast enough for double time"? and with the strains of the "Inman Line" or "Northern Route" still ringing in our ears, would not Canker, or some other gifted critic who could not tell Stabat Mater from "Taps," inquire when, by George! that band was ever going to play anything

but "Marching through Georgia"? Was there ever an adjutant who did not think at some time or other that the meanest part of his duty was in running the band? Was there ever a band that did not contain among its talented musicians some irreclaimable devotees to Bacchus? And, as a rule, are not the bandsmen apt to be the most fractious and unruly set in the garrison? Music, that hath charms to soothe the savage breast, by some strange freak of nature develops an unhallowed taste for beer and a distaste for discipline among its chosen disciples, and rare indeed are the instances when the guard-house is not graced by the presence of some prominent instrumentalist, usually the snare-drummer. Yet such was our adjutant's zeal, and so thorough the understanding between himself and his charges, that for two wonderful months not a member of his band had been absent from roll-call or duty, not a man had been noticeably under the influence of liquor, and, as the colonel himself remarked, his horses were better groomed and cared for than those of the companies. But colonels cannot always be with us, and the adjutant who has thoroughly and faithfully served his chief finds himself suddenly thrown some day under the second in command, who is rarely, if ever, thoroughly *en rapport* with the colonel. Within a week from the date of the latter's complimentary allusion to the discipline of the band, and during his temporary absence as witness before a court, the command devolves upon the next in rank at the post, and the adjutant, entering the office with his hands full of papers, is confronted by the sight of this latter functionary excitedly tramping up and down the room and haranguing a knot of a dozen officers in a

manner suggestive of lively indignation. Suddenly the *ad interim* commander turns upon him with,—

"Yes, sir; and the remark applies equally to you, sir. Your band is utterly demoralized, by George!—*utterly demoralized*, sir. This morning my breakfast was half an hour late, and, when I sent into the kitchen to hurry it up, there was my cook, sir, sitting on your bass-drummer's lap." And the senior officer glares upon the subaltern as though he were the medium through which the attentions of the goddess of the kitchen had been alienated from their proper object. Both the adjutant and the bystanders may and probably do consider that perhaps the charge of demoralization might be more aptly applied to the cook than the band, but they have the profound sagacity to keep such opinions to themselves until they get out of ear-shot of the office.

But all this time those back returns still hang fire. Companies "P" and "R" have been hurried out on a midwinter's chase after the fleetest of Plain warriors, and are away up among the snows of the Big Horn Mountains. Their returns are not in, and the regimental papers cannot be finished until they are. Department and division adjutant-generals again assail us with mandates to furnish those papers at once. The adjutant writes imploringly to the captains of "P" and "R," and in the course of a month those gentlemen reply by inquiring indignantly how in the name of Jack Frost we expect them to make out returns with the thermometer thirty degrees below zero, and all papers three hundred miles away. "You come out here and catch these Cheyennes, and we'll only be too [adjectived] glad to come in there and make out papers."

The adjutant has hunted the regiment high and low for more clerks, but every captain needs his own, no more are to had, and now the thoroughly wretched subaltern is sitting up until two and three in the morning working at those papers himself. In cheerful appreciation of his clerical labors a general court-martial is convened at the post, and the adjutant is assigned to duty as judge-advocate. Why this should be so passes all comprehension, but in nine out of ten cases when a court is ordered to meet at the head-quarters of a regiment, the discriminating officials of the general commanding saddle the work of that court on the shoulders of the adjutant. It is bad enough in the infantry, but when it comes to the cavalry it is worse than imposition.

The adjutant is getting, possibly, three or four hours of broken and troubled sleep now, and many a morning finds him dispensing with breakfast altogether. His three clerks are working diligently, when suddenly the enlistment of the first and best—the only reliable one among them—expires, and he takes his final statements and a good character with him on his way to a situation where he can get ten times the pay for one-half the work.

At last "P" and "R" return from their winter campaign, and by dint of vigorous spurring from head-quarters are induced to send in the needed returns in the course of a fortnight, and just as the adjutant places in the hands of his two remaining assistants a carefully-completed original of all the required papers, with instructions to work night and day to copy them, "up comes an order" which sends the colonel hurrying Eastward to take command of troops assembling to suppress riots

consequent on railway strikes, and the colonel directs the adjutant to leave all and not follow but accompany him on first train. The captain left in command promises to see that the clerks work on those returns and mail them to the adjutant as fast as completed. In the course of a fortnight, as they don't come, the latter first writes, then telegraphs, and finally extorts a reply from the official pretty much as follows:

"DEAR X.,—Both clerks got on a drunk soon after you left, and raised merry Hades. Put them in guard-house to sober off, and then set them to work under sentinel. They got the sentry drunk too, and he and Peck went off to town together and haven't been heard of since. Schmidt (the other clerk) swears he don't know where your 'originals' are; says he thinks Peck built a fire of them when he was crazy drunk.

"Yours, in haste,

"CURBIT."

The delights of civilization, the luxuries of "palatial hotels," the fêting of grateful citizens who have welcomed the Regulars right royally (as the only reliable protection against mob violence), are all forgotten; the unhappy adjutant obtains immediate authority to hasten back to the frontier, and there, at head-quarters, he finds complete confirmation of Curbit's letter and his own fears. With only one clerk left, he goes drearily to work to repair damages; all has to be done over again, but, by dint of ceaseless effort, he succeeds in the course of two weeks in making up most of the large array of missing papers. He is only two or three months be-

hind, and things are beginning to brighten, when the war-cloud that has been hovering over the Northwest for the last month spreads and gathers strength; an Indian band, small but plucky, bidding defiance to the troops of the Pacific slope, is making a dash across the continent to gain a refuge among the sympathetic red men of the eastern plains. We have been back from "riot duty" just three weeks when one evening our colonel receives a telegram directing him to proceed by first train to a station in the far West, thence by stage to the Wind River Valley, there to organize a command to march to the very heart of the continent, the vicinity of the wild park of the Yellowstone, the entire regiment to follow him by rail and forced marches. The colonel hands it to his staff-officer with the simple remark, "You and I start at once," and the adjutant, eagerly welcoming the prospect of field-service, and almost savagely gleeful at the arrival of such admirable excuse for shortcomings in the regimental office, hurries off to make his preparations for the ensuing campaign.

Once again it is November before we return to headquarters, desks, and papers, and once more seven months' returns are in arrears, once again the same grind commences and new complications arise. But, Merciful Powers! the pages of the *United Service* are all too limited for the recital of half the features, exasperating or comical, that go to make up the experiences of the adjutant of a cavalry regiment on the "frontier." Looking over Sanger's "Duties of Staff-Officers," and accepting as gospel truth his theories, drifting back over the tide of time to boyish days in the seaboard casemate, where we youngsters were wont to hear him ex-

pound on military duties generally, recalling the hopes and ambitions in his case so fully realized, we find ourselves wondering, *par exemple*, just what he would have said in his own vigorous English had his lot been cast in the cavalry and his carefully-prepared papers in the fire.

THE ORDNANCE OFFICER.

NOT the officer *de jure*, the blessed possessor of a commission in that gilt-edged array of scientists, the Ordnance Department, but the unhappy *de facto* ordnance officer who is detailed to perform the duties of that exalted station, but by no means to participate in any of the comforts, elegancies, *agrémens*, etc., appertaining thereto. Just the same abstruse and incomprehensible reasoning to which we alluded in a previous article (The Adjutant) as impelling the department commander (through his assistant adjutant-general) to select the hardest-worked man in a garrison and make him judge-advocate of a general court, just that identical hang-for-a-sheep-as-a-lamb style of argument picked us out when adjutant and plunged us into an abyss of misery that, could it have been foreseen, would have led to our resignation on the spot.

We were away up near the Platte when it began, so easily, so innocently, yet insidiously, as every other diabolism begins, that no human soul could have foretold the sequel. "Mr. X.," said the colonel, one bright June afternoon, "we march early day after to-morrow, and the quartermaster wants arms for his teamsters; then we've got to arm these scouts,—yes, and mount them; there's Bill and Louis Sans something and Sioux Pete, and—well, a whole raft of 'em. We've got to fit 'em all out."

Mr. X. replied that he had nothing but the arms and horse equipments of the non-commissioned staff and band, all in use, but added, with a wisdom beyond his years, "However, colonel, the quartermaster is in at the fort now; all these men are on his papers, and they are with him drawing rations. Why can't he draw arms, equipments, and all that right there? The commanding officer will issue on your order as district commander."

"So he could," says the colonel, reflectively; "but he says he'd rather you'd do it."

"Undoubtedly," replies Mr. X. "There isn't an officer in the army or out of it that wouldn't; it's like the best place to have a boil. But I want to get those regimental returns started as soon as we get in."

"You won't, then. I ordered every kind of desk and paper left back at Cheyenne; we're stripped for action. Tell you what: you just issue orders appointing yourself ordnance officer of the Black Hills column, and get a regular outfit of what we need. That'll fix it." And, with the cheerful consciousness of having done his whole duty and relieved himself of a burden, the colonel turns in for a nap.

Mr. X. obeyed orders, issued the order signed by himself as acting assistant adjutant-general, then made a modest computation of what would be needed. Next day at breakfast time he showed it to the colonel, who cheerily remarked, "Oh, didn't I tell you? I fixed all that. We're going to have a rousing campaign, and we've got to have an abundant supply. It'll all be out this afternoon, invoiced to me, but you sign the receipts. Then bust into it and equip everybody soon as you can. Here's the two doctors, and some more scouts; and old

Stamper, the paymaster, he's going, too, and Plodder and Hoofit, of the infantry. Fit 'em all out."

Mr. X.'s appetite for his breakfast left him suddenly. "In for a penny, in for a pound," quoth he.

Not until 4 P.M. did "the stuff" arrive at camp, and to X.'s unutterable horror three huge wagon-loads of bales and boxes were dumped around his tent and a brace of receipts, longer even than his face, were presented for his signature.

"You don't mean this is all for me?" he gasped.

"Thim's the orders," was the comprehensive reply, and as scouts, teamsters, doctors, and "doughboys" had been waiting for hours for the promised equipment, Mr. X. had no alternative. With a few strokes of the pen he took the plunge into a purgatory which, beginning with the summer of the Centennial year, has held him in torment ever since, and only a merciful Providence can tell when he may hope for release.

Just then the colonel rode into camp. "Issued those things yet, X.? I want you to write some dispatches."

"Here are the things, sir," said X., with a gulp, "only just come, but I'll write dispatches from now till—well, if you'll only hand that mountain of misery to somebody else."

"There ain't another man, X. You'll have to do it. The clerk can write the letters."

It is now 4.45; there are some twenty-odd parties waiting for supplies. X. hurriedly summons a soldier, whom the colonel designates as the proper man to assist him as clerk, and pitches in. X. takes the memoranda in his note-book, and the clerk hands out the items. Rifles to the teamsters, rifles and revolvers to wagon-masters,

arms and horse equipments to the doctors and officers who are to "go along," ammunition to everybody. The number on each arm is carefully noted opposite each man's name. It is dark when they are supplied, and, meantime, X., being adjutant, has had to go off to guard-mounting and to obey two summonses from the colonel, Mr. Plodder, of the infantry, obligingly supplying his place in his absence.

Suddenly Captain Snaffle appears. "X., why the mischief didn't you let me know you were issuing ordnance? I haven't a decent lariat or side-line left in my company."

"There, X., don't you see?" says the colonel, triumphantly; "I told you we'd want all these things. Now, I've no doubt most of the other companies are in the same fix."

It won't do for X. to say that the time *that* should have been attended to was the ten days we lay alongside a big ordnance depot at Cheyenne, where each captain could have supplied his company, and he well-nigh bites his tongue in two in his endeavor to hold it in.

Now, as adjutant, X. issues orders to the company commanders to draw at once from the ordnance officer of the Black Hills column such articles as may be absolutely necessary to equip his company, by order of the colonel, and sends it round through the dimly-lighted camp. Snaffle's first sergeant promptly appears with the following: "Wanted, 38 lariats, 27 side-lines, 12 halters and straps, 8 curb-bridles, 15 saddle-blankets, 4 saddles complete," and behind him follow six soldiers, who dump an indistinguishable mass of "truck" in front of the adjutant's tent.

"What's all this, sergeant?"

"Worn-out stuff, sir, the captain said I was to turn in to the adjutant and get his receipt."

X. springs to his feet with an expletive. "Where is the captain?"

"Gone away to the fort, sir; him and the colonel rode in together half an hour ago."

It is now 9 P.M. We are to march at four in the morning. The orderly sent around with the order comes back saying he "could only find one captain, Stand; the rest were all up at the post saying good-by, and the first sergeants and men had all turned in."

"I'll give you the new stores because I'm ordered to," says X. to the sergeant; "but as for taking charge of all your unserviceable truck, it can't be done." And the sergeant and his party go off laden with the new and the old, just as Captain Stand himself appears with his sergeant and a heavily-laden party. Their wants are the same as Snaffle's, and it takes another half-hour to dispose of them in a similar manner, only Stand says he's going right in to the colonel himself and get X. *ordered* to receive his unserviceable stuff. "It can't be taken along," he says, not illogically.

He does go, and when he gets back to camp at midnight he brings a scrawl from the colonel to poor X. bidding him receipt to all the company commanders for their "unserviceable stores." With the view of possibly mitigating his adjutant's woes, he adds, "A mere memorandum will do." Do! Of course it will,—quite as much damage as an official receipt.

We are to march at 4 A.M., as has been said before; at 3.30 on the following morning the vicinity of the

adjutant's tent looks like a junk-shop. He himself has had just thirty minutes' sleep, during which time he had a sentry over the piles of boxes and the litters of rope and leather. He is unrefreshed and even more aggrieved, for all the stuff is not in. Companies "O" and "S," whose captains had protracted their leave-taking until near reveille, are still to be heard from.

The colonel emerges from his tent brisk and cheery. "Great Cæsar's ghost, X.! What have you got here?"

"Haven't had time to find out yet. There's more to come, sir," is the adjutant's mournful response; and at the moment, as everybody else is snatching a hurried breakfast, the delegations from "O" and "S" arrive with their demands and contributions, and the notes of the "general" have sounded and tents been struck ere the adjutant has settled *their* hash,—he has had none of his own.

"Sound 'boots and saddles,'" says the colonel, once more appearing. "You will go with the advance-guard, X. Of course you want to map the country towards the Cheyenne River."

"Of course I want to, colonel; but——" And, impetuously it must be said, poor X. sets forth that here's enough ordnance to stop his pay for ten years if it isn't cared for.

The colonel checks him impressively. "Now, my dear young friend, don't get agitated. I've seen a heap more service than you have. You needn't trouble yourself a bit. Simply write an order to the commanding officer at the fort to receipt to you for the whole thing. Then make out your pencil memoranda, call upon the quartermaster for wagons, send your clerk in with it. There's the thing

in a nutshell. Now, first write an order for Captain Munger with 'P' company to remain here at camp," etc., etc.

It sounded soothing as—but this is no place for the poetic. Let us see how it worked. The "pencil memoranda" and orders were soon made out, but not before the colonel with his command had started. The quartermaster was called upon for three wagons to carry the things back to the fort. "Three wagons! Good God! X., I've got to leave stores behind as it is! I'm just going after the colonel now hard as I can to tell him."

"Then say for me that all my ordnance is here on the open prairie without a guard, and I can't leave it until he sends relief!" shouts poor X., in desperation, while Pepper, the clerk, stands holding their horses. In twenty minutes the quartermaster is back, black in the face with wrath. "Why in perdition," he wants to know, "did X. get so much d—d stuff?" and then, with much interspersion of profanity, tells him that he is ordered to unload two wagons, send all the ordnance back to the storehouse in charge of Pepper, who was to return at once with the wagons, reload, and be sure and get to camp that night. "As for you, X., he says, 'Come on.'"

The adjutant hands the orders and memoranda over to Pepper, bids him do his best, and, putting spurs to his horse, after a hard ride rejoins the colonel. The latter is savage about something, and receives him with, "I've needed you a dozen times here. You ought to have had that ordnance business finished last night."

That night we camp at Rawhide Butte, twenty-five miles away, and after dark in comes Pepper. "Did you get receipts?"

"I did for the new stuff, sir; but for all that load of old truck the ordnance-sergeant wouldn't take it, sir; said he had positive orders not to."

"Did you show him the orders of the district commander?"

"Yes, sir; but he said he'd have to wait till the commanding officer got up,—that'd be eight or nine o'clock,—an' my orders from the quartermaster was to come right back wid the wagons, sir, an'——"

"And didn't you bring the unserviceable with you?" says X., sepulchrally.

"No, sir. I couldn't, sir: the quartermaster said I was to get right back and load up his things or they'd be stolen; and them was his wagons, so I had to leave the stuff at the storehouse."

"Inside or outside?"

"Well, sir, outside, a'course; the sergeant he was mad at bein' waked up at that hour, and——"

"That will do, Pepper." And X. turns away to have it out with the quartermaster.

To cut short that initial experience, it is needless to say that when the count of that junk was made by the officials at the fort there was a shortage of articles, the money value of which (new) amounted to $572.33, and X., through subsequent wanderings, never found out what became of them.

We hunted Indians awhile along the base of the Black Hills. Then came tidings which brought us in to Fetterman, where vast accessions of officers, recruits, and horses joined and marched Big Hornwards with us. A new colonel had taken command, and to meet the emergency ordnance stores had been ordered by telegraph

from department head-quarters, and Mr. X. woke one morning to find himself responsible for three hundred more bridles, saddles, and halters, five hundred more blankets, side-lines, lariats, etc., besides one hundred revolvers and no end of ammunition.

"Mount all the infantry recruits," said the colonel. Then came innumerable new doctors, scouts, teamsters, wagon-masters. "Supply them all," was the order.

We reached Goose Creek, at the head-waters of the Tongue, and there was General Crook, with a large command, only waiting for our coming to launch forth and give battle to the hostiles over on the Rosebud, forty miles away. All one day was spent in getting ready, and our adjutant ordnance officer did not have time to call his soul his own.

"Get out your boxes," was the order. "Every officer of the three regiments is to go mounted. Give to each a saddle, bridle, blanket, lariat, pistol,—anything he wants, —and take his mem. receipt." And while X. was doing it, and writing orders for his colonel between times, and trying to scribble some few brief lines to the anxious ones far away in Eastern homes, there came a host of company commanders from other cavalry regiments, hungry for new equipments, correspondingly eager to get rid of the old. X. appeals to the adjutant-general of the entire command.

"Fit 'em out all you can," says that energetic official. "We just want to get this crowd into fighting shape quick, and then we'll waltz over to the Rosebud and get blood by the bucketful." So more boxes are hacked to pieces, and for hours officers and men of three regiments of cavalry are going away to distant bivouacs laden with

new equipments and coming back bowed down with junk. It is not improbable that on that August afternoon X. receipted for a thousand pieces of old rope as so many unserviceable lariats. He and Pepper were well-nigh distracted. Even the newspaper correspondents—some of them—had to be provided with saddles or blankets. Even the scouts who for years past had been proud of their old calibre 50's came in with authority to swap them for new 45's, "temporarily, of course," said the order; but who that ever knew a frontiersman would bet a bean on X.'s chances of getting those 45's back "after the battle was over"?

(He didn't. It may as well be told here. Some scouts were discharged on the Yellowstone when X. was in the Black Hills. Some deserted in the Black Hills when X. was on the Yellowstone. Some, like California Joe, Blue Peter, and one other reprobate, shot one another to death in private rows over poker, and nobody ever could find their arms. One, and one only, was killed in manly, open attack on the foe, and for three months what became of his gun was a mystery; then it was found in possession of a discharged soldier, who had bought it from—but this, as the novelists say, is anticipating.)

A glorious morning was the 5th of August, and a fine array the Big Horn and Yellowstone expedition presented as, stripped for combat, it sallied forth to battle. Late the night before, X. had sought the adjutant-general again. "I've got about forty thousand dollars' worth of ordnance left yet, sir; I must have a guard for it. Excuse my mentioning such a trifle; but even that amount would make a serious hole in my stipend."

"Why, hang it all, X., just bundle it into the wagons.

They are all to be left here. We won't be gone six days. We're just going to have one rousing old rattler of a tussle with these hostyles, and then we'll come back here and straighten out. Don't you see?"

It was alluring, of course, but not so reassuring. However, an order was obtained that the ordnance stores should be stowed in wagons designated for the purpose. All the wagon-masters, teamsters, some doctors, etc., were to remain behind; but as adjutant of his regiment it wasn't to be expected that Mr. X. could hang back, even to guard that incubus of ordnance stores, when his regiment was going into action. The command started out buoyantly, with four days' rations in the haversacks, and enough to make up ten days in all on the pack-mules. X. went with them, and never set eyes on that ordnance again *until ten weeks after*, when what was left of it was trundled into his camp in the Black Hills.

It seems that we did not find the Indians over on the Rosebud. They were a little farther on by the time we got there, and a good deal farther on by the time we got to the next place. They led us a dance of eighteen hundred miles that summer and fall, and many a time did X. find himself wondering how it fared with that ordnance. By the 1st of September he was responsible for property scattered all over that portion of the continent bounded by the Missouri, the Platte, and the Rockies.

Eventually these four or five hundred wagons moved round from the Big Horn by way of Reno, Fetterman, Laramie, and Hat Creek to the Hills, where they met us. Meantime, whenever a teamster lost his lariat, or wanted side-lines or a halter, or perchance a blanket or two, as the nights were growing colder, all he had to do

was to go and help himself. Everything had been boxed up at the last moment at Goose Creek, but there wasn't an unopened box when they got to the Hills. Of course the tacit and honorable understanding which obtains among these gentry provided that they were to return these things; but as some got drunk and were left behind at Reno, and others got drunk and were discharged at Fetterman, and others got drunk and killed somebody at Laramie, they did not all remember such a trifle, and the same may be said of their arms.

When the Big Horn and Yellowstone expedition reached the northern Black Hills in September, about one-third of its horses were gone, left dead with exhaustion and starvation on the bleak prairies. As a rule, the saddle and "kit" was abandoned at the same time, as there were no wagons to put them in. When we started from the Belle Fourche to march southward, the general had succeeded in hiring a motley array of miners' teams to carry along rations, wounded officers, sick soldiers, and a beggarly batch of Indian prisoners.

One morning, as the horses were still dropping by scores, X. came suddenly upon a holocaust of saddles, bridles, and other cavalry equipments. A sergeant and some men had heaped them in a huge pyramid and were working hard to make them burn. "What does this mean?" said he.

"Quartermaster's orders," said the sergeant. "Abandoned property; somebody ordered it fired, sir."

X. thought of his tempting stores so many hundred miles away, and a bright thought struck him; he had seen an empty wagon a short distance back, and hailing the driver, asked him where he was bound. "Damfino," said

the Black-Hiller. "Quartermaster hired me yesterday on the Whitewood and told me to come along; but I reckon he's clean forgot me. I ain't had a thing to do."

In ten minutes X. had that wagon loaded up with every kind of horse equipment except blankets; none of them had been left, for the nights were frosty and our men were suffering keenly. An old cavalry officer hailed him on seeing his occupation to inquire what he was doing. "Taking it up," said X. "There's no telling how short I'll be at the end of this campaign."

"Well," said the veteran, "go ahead if it's to cover a shortage; but if you think that by picking up and turning in a few dozen saddles the ordnance people will let you off a few dozen side-lines, you're 'way off. If you were to save them a million dollars' worth of property in ten years' service and come out short a nickel on your own account, they'd grind it out of you; that's my experience."

However, the wagon-load went far to balance the deficit on the Platte, and X. was enabled to take up and turn in some thirty-seven curb-bridles at Red Cloud later on; but then teamsters had no special use for curb-bridles, and of all the items which had been stored in the wagons at Goose Creek, curb-bridles seemed to be the only one upon which heavy drafts had not been made.

Now, the question was, how to recover those missing articles. At Goose Creek, by the directions of the adjutant-general, the stores had been placed in charge of the wagon-master of the train. X. sent for him and he came,—an entirely new man. "Where's ——?" "Him? oh! he was discharged at Reno. Leastwise I've been told so. I didn't come in charge of this train till they

got to Laramie." That hope proved delusive. Next day X. tried the chief quartermaster. He was all courtesy and business, would do anything. X. suggested inspecting the five hundred odd teamsters and taking away every new side-line, lariat, etc. It started in one corral, and an irate regimental quartermaster had it stopped in no time. "He'd got those things himself at Fetterman." By the time the inspectors got to the other corrals nothing was to be found, old or new. Next day came orders to prepare for a new campaign or scout, and once again X. spent two days reissuing to the cavalry and receiving their used-up stuff by order. This scout amounted to nothing and was soon over, and, once in at Red Cloud, X. obtained authority to turn in all the stores appertaining to the Big Horn and Yellowstone expedition.

Several wagon-loads were duly transferred at the magazine, and with all this burden off his mind X. gleefully looked at his memoranda only to find himself deep in the mire as ever, for, scattered all over the vast fields of our operations, were quantities of arms, horse equipments, etc., issued to officers, scouts, guides, teamsters, and the like, and no end of blankets, side-lines, lariats, and picket-pins, for which he had no vouchers whatsoever.

Mr. Plodder, of the infantry, who had obligingly assisted him the opening night on the Platte, volunteered an explanation which in very small degree accounted for the shortage in the matter of lariats. "You see, X., so many men came along who wanted a 'halter shank' that night, and if those rope things weren't halter shanks I didn't know what they were." This was by no means consolatory, though a number of cavalry officers appeared to derive an immense amount of fun therefrom.

The expedition broke up at Red Cloud and scattered all over the department. With some six companies of the regiment, X. marched into a big post on the Union Pacific. The colonel was East on leave, the major was in command and only waiting for the return of some other field-officers to go on leave himself. An old colonel of cavalry was in command of the post when we arrived, and he was only waiting for our coming to take his departure on the six months' leave then burning in his pocket. War Department orders had made post commanders the ordnance officers of their posts, and as such the old colonel informed our major that all the papers were made out and he was ready to transfer at once. His family were all in New York to sail on the steamer of a certain date, and he must be there to meet them. Our major explained that he too was expecting leave every day, that his colonel would soon be back, etc., but after some skirmising a result was arrived at satisfactory to them both. Mr. X. was hereby appointed ordnance officer of the post, and would relieve Colonel Blank at once. Now, X. knew very well that War Department orders made post commanders alone the parties responsible for ordnance and ordnance stores. "But," said the major, "the colonel will take charge as soon as he arrives, and, as you see, it is absolutely necessary for Colonel Blank to get away at once." The order was issued, and then came the transfer. In less than a fortnight X. had receipted for a whole arsenal.

In an ordinary wooden building, surrounded by equally inflammable quartermaster's and commissary storehouses, were piled tier on tier of boxes containing equipments, infantry and cavalry, of every possible description.

Another room of the same size was equally full of arms and ammunition.

"The building is absolutely unfit for the purpose," said X.'s predecessor. "It has been condemned by a board of survey, and I have represented the great exposure and risk in having so many valuable stores in such a place, but all to no purpose." Everything was in as good order as such a jam could be in a building not more than sixty by twenty-five; and the colonel, in turning over, said to X., "You will find our old ordnance-sergeant one of the most faithful men that ever lived. His word is truth itself."

Just how or why so large an accumulation of stores had been sent to this particular post there was no time to explain. Our own colonel came back in a fortnight. X. informed him of the situation, showed him the huge array of stores, daily augmented by fresh arrivals from Rock Island; the colonel pronounced it an imposition, said that if it were intended to make a supply depot of the fort he would insist on having a regular ordnance officer stationed there, and would write at once and make application; which he probably did, for the ordnance officer arrived seventeen months afterwards. "Meantime, Mr. X.," said he, "you will continue in charge."

This is how X. came to be running an arsenal and adjutant's office at one and the same time. We have seen something of how the latter worked; now for the arsenal.

It became apparent within a few days that the ordnance storehouse of Fort —— was intended as a depot of supply for the entire department of the Platte and a good deal outside of it. How very much easier, simpler, more sys-

tematic it was for the commanding officer at Rock Island, with his array of instructed clerks and packers, to ship in bulk, three or four hundred at a time, the various kinds of ordnance stores that might be required on the frontier to the central post of that department! What mattered it to the ordnance department that the labor of unpacking and repacking, distribution, and the infinite clerical labor required should fall upon one already overworked cavalry subaltern and one faithful old sergeant? What mattered it that half the stores thus shipped had to be sent back in smaller lots over much of the road they had traveled in supplying the requisitions from interior posts, thus doubling the cost of transportation? Yet this is exactly what did occur, and for eighteen months the whole work of supplying that large and most needy department fell upon the shoulders of that old sergeant, for never a bit of help did we get except an occasional man to assist in packing or unloading.

All the troops of General Crook's command had been for months in the field, and without exception had to be resupplied company by company. Every day of the week brought requisitions from department head-quarters "to be filled from the stores at Fort ——." Every week brought new loads of supplies from Rock Island, and, notwithstanding the fact that we were constantly shipping, by the end of December our storehouse was overflowing. In the item of ammunition there were over six hundred thousand rounds, and the colonel, alarmed at having such a prospective volcano in our midst, ordered it removed to the magazine.

Being built for the convenience of the post, this magazine had been located exactly a mile and a half away

and out on the open prairie. It was a brick shell, with a light roof and heavy door, evidently designed to oppose little resistance to an explosion from within or "prospectors" from without, but while it might be unsafe, the adjutant (acting ordnance officer) was glad to have additional room in the storehouses, where now there were in the neighborhood of a thousand sets of infantry and cavalry equipments. The colonel ordered a guard for the magazine, but after a week of suffering through bleak, wintry, freezing nights the men looked so piteous at the detail for magazine-guard that he took it off. Then it was robbed. A party of citizens from the neighboring town sallied forth one bitter cold night and helped themselves to what they could carry. X. tracked them through the snow back to town on the following day, and after some detective work succeeded in securing the arrest of one of the parties who had a lot of the stolen property in his cellar. He was nabbed by the United States marshal and duly tried before a jury of his peers. Just how many of that intelligent jury were concerned in the robbery itself is impossible to say, but the verdict was not guilty; and it may be parenthetically remarked that the verdict of every jury in that enlightened borough in every case where a civilian was arraigned for crimes against the life or property of Uncle Sam's retainers, were it stealing a pistol, running off a horse, or murdering a soldier in cold blood, the verdict was similarly "not guilty."

The guard was again placed over the magazine, duly supplied with a "banked" tent and abundant fuel; then, to make room in the storehouses at the post, we moved some of the arms down to the magazine and were about straightening out the storehouses a second time when the

troops commenced drifting in from Mackenzie's winter raid against the Cheyennes, and each command as it arrived deposited a wagon-load or more of used-up saddles, halters, side-lines, lariats, etc., and demanded receipts. In less than three weeks the east storeroom looked like ten junk-shops rolled into one.

Meantime, we got into a row with the depot quartermaster. It usually happened that his wagons arrived with a load of ordnance just as "boots and saddles" was sounding for battalion drill, and the teamsters would come to X. for his receipts just as that much badgered ordnance officer, in his capacity as adjutant, was riding forth to form the line. "Mr. X.," said the quartermaster, "you keep my men waiting there day after day for several hours, and it's got to be stopped." X. tells him by all means to stop it, which doesn't satisfy the quartermaster somehow, and he writes officially to the colonel commanding to complain that his ordnance officer is neglecting his business and obstructing the public service by detaining quartermaster teams. The colonel knows perfectly well that his adjutant is "on the jump" from daybreak until—well, he doesn't begin to know how long, but all the morning at any rate, yet he summons him to hear what the quartermaster's complaints are. X. suggests that a good way out of it would be to relieve him from duty as an ordnance officer and put some one in who could devote twenty hours out of twenty-four to the matter. The colonel again concludes that it is an imposition, and decides to write another letter requesting the detail of a regular ordnance officer, X. meantime to remain in charge and do the best he can.

All this time there is that back business of the Big

Horn expedition to settle up, and X. is writing letters all over the country to officers who were connected therewith, in the desperately hopeless undertaking of getting possession of or receipts for the arms and equipments issued during the campaign to all manner of people, who were not to be found at Red Cloud and Laramie when we dissolved. It was a fortune in postage-stamps and time, but month by month the accountability was lessened, and X. began to feel vaguely encouraged. One day it transpired that a discharged soldier had a new calibre 45 rifle. He was overhauled and questioned as to how he obtained it, and frankly stated that he had bought it from Pepper. This was a bombshell in the camp. Next it transpired that Pepper had forged his colonel's name to an application for his (Pepper's) discharge, on the ground of habitual intemperance, and Pepper, who had been under guard, was remanded to closer confinement, with a sentinel to accompany every movement of his outside the guard-house. Next, Pepper skipped away from the sentinel, and from that time to this has succeeded in evading recapture. The sentinel was tried by general court, but proved that he fired seven shots at the retreating form of Pepper, who could run like a deer, and the court was satisfied.

Then, in the dead of night, some miscreants ran a wagon up to the storehouses, effected an entrance into the quartermaster's shanty and broke through the partition between that and the ordnance-rooms, and loaded up with such things as they could lay hands on. They were evidently in search of ammunition, and evidently too disturbed and hurried in their search, for they mistook boxes of picket-pins for metallic cartridges, and

hauled off several boxes of those useless pegs. It was some comfort to X. to reflect how they must have sworn when they discovered their blunder. "Where was your sentinel?" we hear some "stalwart" exclaim. Bless your heart, sir, he was right there, if his statement could be believed; but then, you see, he was guarding a huge coal-shed, a commissary storehouse, two quartermaster's storehouses, a saddler's shop, and some few loads of hay, and the night was dark as pitch. "He didn't see nor hear nuthin'." Neither did the other two.

Boards of survey were running, three or four at a time, all that winter. They relieved X. So did the department commander, and so eventually did the ordnance department; but not without a kick or two.

Once X. was ordered to "take up" again certain items which a board of survey had recommended that he be authorized, and that the department commander had authorized him, to drop, because, said the chief of ordnance, it is not shown that the responsible officer exercised proper vigilance to prevent loss. This was embarrassing, but eventually the bureau yielded the point, "under the circumstances," and the items remained dropped.

Spring came, so did the summer of '77, and all this time stores were coming too, and, in smaller parcels, going day after day, but no sign of relief was manifest. In July the great railroad riots took place, and the colonel was ordered eastward by first train to assume command of the troops collecting at an important point, and the colonel ordered his adjutant to go with him. So, with parting injunctions to the faithful old sergeant to take charge in his absence, and have Captain Curbit sign

all invoices "for Lieutenant X.," the ordnance officer turned his back on more than a fortune in stores, rushed off with his chief, and was gone three weeks. Returning and finding everything working smoothly, thanks to the ceaseless care and attention of his invaluable ally, the sergeant, he returned to his work of straightening out the Big Horn papers, when again came telegraphic orders sending colonel and everybody into the far Northwest, by first train, after the Nez Perces. Once more the spectacle was presented of the ordnance officer abandoning his thousands and thousands of dollars' worth of stores in obedience to his orders, trusting everything to Providence and that crown-jewel of a sergeant, and this time he was gone three months. How *could* a man in the Yellowstone Park be held responsible for property in Southern Wyoming? "He should have transferred it before starting," your critic says. My pragmatical friend, it took a month to transfer that property when the transfer was made, and Mr. X. was ordered to leave "on first train." "Then he oughtn't to have been appointed in the first place." That is precisely our opinion. Moreover, we thought from beginning to end of that business that the ordnance department, in establishing that great magazine in the centre of the scene of Indian operations in '76, should have decorated it with one of its own officers and a squad of assistants to back him.

Of course there were some comical features in our experience. One of the liveliest cavalrymen in the department was the gallant captain of the gray troop of the Second Cavalry. He and his men were always out scouting somewhere, and it so happened that in the

summer of 1877 he had a mixed armament of Colt's and Smith & Wesson revolvers in his troop. A short time previous, X. had been ordered to send him five thousand rounds of *Colt's* revolver ball-cartridges, and did so. One blissful June morning the telegraph operator at the post darted in to X. with a dispatch from the chief ordnance officer at Omaha. "Captain Egan reports that the cartridges you sent him will not fit his pistols. What's the matter?" Ten minutes after came another from "Teddy" himself: "Cannot use the cartridges; all too long." Then in came the colonel with a dispatch from department head-quarters, and a perturbed expression on his face. "Mr. X., what is the matter with the cartridges sent Captain Egan? The adjutant-general is after us with a sharp stick."

X. meantime has summoned the ordnance-sergeant, and that veteran glances over the papers and explains the matter in a dozen words. "He's been trying to use Colt's revolver cartridges in his Smith & Wessons, sir," and so it proved. The "revolver ball-cartridge" is made to fit both the Colt and the Smith & Wesson, whereas the "Colt's revolver ball-cartridge" can be used only in the Colt. This information was telegraphed at once to the captain in the field and the explanation wired to Omaha, but meantime head-quarters had been racked to its foundation at a discovery of so alarming a nature. Dispatches had been sent all over the country to cavalry company commanders directing them to test their cartridges in Smith & Wesson pistols and report, and notwithstanding our explanation an aide-de-camp was hurried out to investigate; he arrived next day, looked at the two pistols and two styles of cartridges, remarked that

it reminded him of the profound philosopher who had two holes cut in his door for his cats, a big hole for the big cat and a little hole for the other, and went back to Omaha. Shortly afterwards all Smith & Wesson pistols were called in and none but Colt's issued.

We were constantly in receipt of telegraphic orders to ship stores at once to all manner of remote posts. One morning early came two dispatches: the first saying, "Ship *by express*, first train, to commanding officer Company ——, Second Cavalry," so many carbines, slings, belts, pouches, etc., and half an hour afterwards a similar message to send just about the same things to the commanding officer of another company, in all comprising arms, ammunition, and equipments for some fifty men. Mr. X. and his sergeant pitched in with vim, an orderly was hurried down to the depot to secure the co-operation of the quartermaster's teams and the express company, and by noon, when the Union Pacific train rolled in from the East, the packing-boxes were at the station to meet it. The proper invoices and receipts went with the property and others by mail to the designated officers, but the end of the quarter came and brought no receipts whatever. X. wrote to the company commanders, then 'way up near the Wind River Valley, and requested that they be sent at once. One of them replied that he didn't get more than half the things specified in the invoice, and the other said pretty much the same thing, only worse. This wouldn't do by any means. X. knew that every item on the invoice was in those boxes, and so retorted. Then it transpired that the stores were required to arm and equip a lot of recruits going up to join those companies under command of a lieutenant

who had opened the boxes and distributed the arms, etc., on the railroad. X., therefore, sent him invoices and requested that he receipt, and by and by came the reply, "I'm not responsible for the stores at all. They were not invoiced to me. I simply took them to arm my recruits." And then the gentleman obligingly went on, "What you want to do is to make out certified invoices and send them in with your papers, etc., if they (company commanders) will not receipt." X. could not see that point at all, and demanded that the officer who took the responsibility of opening and distributing should sign the receipts, but it was six months afterwards before they came, and then only on compulsion.

At last, seventeen months after Mr. X. was placed temporarily in charge of those ordnance stores, all the real work having been completed, Indian campaigning being virtually over in the department of the Platte, all the troops having been supplied with new equipments to replace those worn out in the service, and the lull in business was enabling the ordnance sergeant to commence "straightening out" the contents of the storehouse, the long-expected official of the ordnance department put in his appearance, and soon after him came the squad of assistants, clerical and otherwise, without which no well-regulated ordnance establishment can be conducted, but which we were compelled to do without. The transfer of property began without delay, and in the course of six weeks Mr. X. stood relieved. He was behind in only one item of any consequence, and away ahead on general average. It is needless to say that the shortage stands charged against him, while there is nothing to his credit.

Now, we are painfully conscious that in all this long account of an experience as acting ordnance officer there is nothing entertaining or lively; it is as solemn as a sepulchre, but so was the experience. We are portraying trials and tribulations, and from its inception to the still indefinite end this has been all vexation of spirit.* We look back over those massive monuments of retained papers, and wonder how we ever dared to go to sleep. We recall the constant, the incessant round of duties required of the adjutant from reveille until tattoo, attending morning and evening stables, and all drills, besides his office and parade duties, and wonder what a genuine ordnance officer would have said and done under the circumstances. We recall the issue of stores "on memorandum receipt" under the peaks of the Big Horn and the pines of the Black Hills, and wonder why no ordnance officer was sent with Crook's command. We met one with Terry on the Yellowstone, but he was only out to see how the equipments worked in the field, had no property responsibilities, and was as free from care and as buoyant as a cork; but then Terry's people were housed in comfort, had carpets and barrels of bottled ale in their tents, and could support an ordnance officer, but we poor devils had neither tent nor change of raiment, and hard-tack and bacon were the daily bread of officers and men until we had to come down to horse-meat. Looking back at the depot in charge of which we so unluckily stumbled, and compiling from our papers some figures of the work done, we find that, besides the incalculable worry over minor trifles, we had handled before the arrival of our

* It was settled some time after the publication of this paper in the *United Service*.

relief the quantity of ordnance and stores tabled herewith:

	Received.	Distributed.
Rounds of ammunition	1,550,000	1,054,015
Rifles and carbines	2,304	1,116
Revolvers	1,754	755
Sabres	1,664	728
Infantry equipments	1,543	1,351
Cartridge-boxes and pouches	2,565	896
Holsters	1,806	1,146
Haversacks	2,000	873
Bridles	3,082	1,979
Halters and straps	1,911	1,796
Lariats	2,301	2,290
Nose-bags	1,300	672
Saddles	1,069	962
Surcingles	1,264	1,082
Saddle-blankets	1,799	1,776
Side-lines	2,400	2,184

We may be in error, but are constrained to the belief that in that table alone the amount of stores is not so trivial as to be beneath the dignity of the ordnance officer *de jure*, and we are confessedly so pig-headed that to this day we cannot be brought to see the propriety or justice of picking out a cavalry adjutant, requiring him to attend to every item of his own duty in garrison or in the field, and yet to control and become pecuniarily responsible for such an array of ordnance work and ordnance stores as that.

AT WEST POINT.

Now, if you please, those readers who are not yet bored to death with Mr. X.'s tribulations in the *rôles* of adjutant and ordnance officer will follow him back some ten years or more and take a peep at the Military Academy during a critical period of its history. It may be objected that what happened to Mr. X. then and there cannot be regarded as a staff affair, and Mr. X. admits the point as well taken; but under the general title of these sketches he had purposed to show some of the troublous experiences of a subaltern when out of his tactical groove in the line of file-closers, and a detail at West Point was one of them.

Not but that he had more or less of an enjoyable time there. The Academy is by no means an unpleasant station; but in the light of subsequent events Mr. X. cannot help thinking how very much better a time he could have had if mighty experiments were not attempted just at that period.

To begin with, it was with sentiments of unmixed satisfaction that Mr. X. received, one bright August morning, an intimation from the commandant of cadets that he had applied for him as an assistant in the department of tactics; and a few days later there came an order in due form directing him to proceed to West Point and report to the superintendent thereof for duty.

For some years previous Mr. X. had served as a sub-

altern in a "swell" light battery under a choleric captain, who was more explosive than the best percussion-shell in the market; then, having served out his apprenticeship in the light, he had been duly transferred to a heavy battery, whose commander was as easy-going and lax as the other had been capricious and exacting. The new duties were slow and distasteful after the life and vim of the mounted service, and Mr. X. was wondering how long he could stand it, when the detail reached him. West Point was thronged with visitors when he arrived and found himself, with some twenty new assignments, attending the closing party of the season.

In something like a fortnight those officers and families who, having been ordered thither during the war, and having been left there ever since, had begun to look upon West Point as a bit of personal property, were well-nigh ready to move out and give place to the new comers. Mr. X. being a second lieutenant, the junior of his department and unmarried, was happily relegated to a room in the barracks adjoining the cadet company which he was assigned to command, and consequently could look on in philosophical amusement at the little tiffs and feminine spats which accompanied the movings out and in of the married households. A few weeks more served to accustom him thoroughly to the new and very light duties; and having become a member of the mess, Mr. X. prepared to spend an enjoyable winter.

Entering the library one sunny September morning, Mr. X. came suddenly upon a group of strangers of martial mien despite the garb of civilians, and, in response to an inquiry, directed the spokesman to the superintendent's office. Next, the superintendent's orderly made

his appearance with the superintendent's compliments, and would the lieutenant be so good as to step there a moment. Mr. X. stepped as requested, and found the superintendent affably entertaining the group. "Oh, gentlemen, let me present my young friend, Captain X.; Sir Francis Famous, Captain X.; Major Freeman, Captain X.; Captain Bellairs, Captain X. I deeply regret, gentlemen, that my engagements are such that I cannot accompany you, and that I knew nothing of your coming; but Captain X. will do the honors for me, I am sure. Captain, these gentlemen are of the British army, and eager to see all that there is at West Point; I have given orders that the buildings and rooms should be opened to you." And the superintendent smiled sweetly and confidingly upon Mr. X., upon whom he had never lavished more than mere official notice up to that moment.

Mr. X. accepts his charge, blushing at the unexpected brevet, and presently marshals his transatlantic warriors out of the urbane presence of the commander. He finds the Englishmen pleasant, chatty fellows, full of curiosity and interest, scrupulously returning the salutes of sentinels, soldiers, and cadets who happen to pass, and touching their hats respectfully as they walk under the flag. X. conducts them through the model-rooms, the drawing-academy, museum, mess- and riding-hall, barracks, and ordnance-yards, then scrambles with them 'way up to Fort Put, where the view strikes them simultaneously as being awfully jolly, then down again among the batteries, around "Flirtation," and thus having consumed some two or three hours, and being not a little heated and dusty, X. winds up with the cool shades of the officers' mess, and regales his friends on Bass, brandy

and water, and cigars. They do it on their side of the water, and expect it here. Presently they are joined by our genial Colonel Bullock and several subalterns, who are duly presented to the trio of British, and invited to join them in refreshments. They add materially to the entertainment and to its final expense, but Mr. X. feels a professional pride in having his guests suitably received; and, as they are obliged to go back to New York by the afternoon train and cannot stay to dinner, they cordially accept his invitation to lunch, and three or four jovial souls among the married officers conclude they would rather lunch informally with the Englishmen at the mess than go home to dinner.

Now, it must be here explained that, though by no means in its infancy in those days, the officers' mess at West Point was controlled by a set of rules and regulations that might have been concocted for the guidance of the pupils of a small boarding-school; and one of those rules was to the effect that any officer who introduced friends to the mess-table, or invited them to partake of its hospitality, should be charged individually with the cost of their entertainment. Mr. X. knew it perfectly well, and knew also that in the English service there was an especial fund for the entertainment of visitors, and doubtless all foreign officers supposed that the same civilized custom obtained at the Military Academy of the United States. However, to go on. When it comes time for the gentlemen of Her Majesty's service to start for the train, they are duly escorted to the ferry, and depart, evidently delighted with their visit, and professing unbounded hopes of "seeing all you jolly good fellows at the Rag one of these days, you know."

About a fortnight after, Mr. X. encounters the superintendent, who accosts him cheerfully with, "Oh, Mr. X.; just the man I wanted to see. I've had a pleasant letter from Sir Francis Famous, in which he expresses his great appreciation of the courtesies extended to him here, and he desires to be remembered to you. It seems he is a very distinguished cavalry officer, and I am gratified that we were able to show him so much attention." Mr. X. mumbles something to the effect that he is charmed to hear it all, and while abstractedly wondering wherein his commander had shown the distinguished cavalryman so much attention, is recalled to his senses by the next remark: "By the way, he mentions that there are two or three other young fellows of his acquaintance coming up next week; you just look out for them, will you? and see that they have a—well, show them all the attention you can."

Sure enough, another week brings two more young Britons with honest, sun-tanned faces and a keen zest for sight-seeing. One has been serving in India, the other at Hong-Kong, and together they are "doing" the United States on long leave. Having first paid their respects to the commanding officer,—that formality which the English soldier never neglects,—they are affably entertained by that functionary while his orderly hunts up Mr. X., who happens to be on his way to the riding-hall, and thither conducts his new acquaintances, not, however, until he has heard the superintendent express his great regret that previous engagements prevented his inviting them to dine that day, "but his young friend, Captain X.," etc., to which one of them blushingly murmurs, "Oh,

thanks, thanks," and the other, "Ah—to-morrow, perhaps?" which last the superintendent does not seem to hear. These two are tiptop young soldiers. They are delighted with the cadet riding, but disgusted with the McClellan saddle, which does not seem to suit their cross-country seat when they try it; but they go riding with X., and do the rounds of the Point, and are introduced to many of the officers at the mess, and dine there with X. and his friends, where we duly drink Her Majesty's health in unaccustomed and rather fiery sherry, and when bedtime comes they have accepted the invitations of X. and a brother officer to rough it in the barracks with them; and so they, too, spend three days or so at the Point, and go off well pleased, at least with what they saw; and this time X.'s brother officer, a poor infantry sub., insists on sharing expenses. It is not long after this that the superintendent smilingly informs Mr. X., one bright autumn morning, that, in his opinion, "one good turn deserves another;" and as Mr. X. is wondering what his good turn deserves, the superintendent proceeds to develop a new and entirely original interpretation of the saying. "You did very nicely by those Englishmen, Mr. X. Now, here is a party of French naval officers coming up to-day, and as I know you speak French——" "Indeed, I don't, sir," says X. "Well, everybody says you do; and, at all events, you seem to have more *savoir-faire* than the others (last month's mess-bill was a stunner, thinks Mr. X.; now what will this one be?), and I will be glad to have you take them in hand. You have nothing to do to prevent it, have you?" he asks as a clincher; and so Mr. X. becomes the entertainer of half a dozen elaborately polite Frenchmen, who accept the

supposed hospitality of the mess as freely as that of their own would have been tendered.

Now, this sort of thing may strike the average reader as a very trivial source of tribulation, but it had its attendant drags, and by and by the thing worked itself into a first-class millstone-around-the-neck. For two mortal years visitors—English, French, German, Austrian, and Russian—kept arriving at the Academy, and time and again Mr. X. had to listen to the same apology from the superintendent, and the same intimation that his young friend Captain X. would do the honors. Time and again these parties had to be entertained; and, though one thousand dollars a year was placed in the hands of the superintendent for the entertainment of visitors to the Academy, *that* presumably went to the Board of Visitors in June, and the politicians who voted it when they dropped in for a visit. These were the days when superintendents were not generals, and had no attendant aides-de-camp to help them through the mill, and so Mr. X. was utilized; and while he could not and would not ask the mess to defray these expenses of entertainment, and while it rarely happened that members thereof came forward and volunteered to share them with him, he soon found, to his ineffable disgust, that there were some two or three men who generally dropped in when foreign visitors were there, who were sure to be presented and to accept invitations to join in the inevitable refreshments, and then to go off and say that that fellow X. was burning his candle at both ends, and would soon find himself swamped. As for the superintendent, it probably never occurred to him that it cost X. a cent.

X. was somewhat ruefully contemplating a mess-bill and treasurer's account of the usual dimensions (for him) one morning in early spring-time, when a brother officer of the engineers dropped in for a chat. "What do you think of the news?" was the first remark that seemed to possess more than a languid interest for either party. "Haven't heard any worth thinking about," was the reply. "Didn't you know two niggers had been appointed cadets?" said one. "No; but I'm not in the least surprised," said the other. "Well, it is true; I heard it at the supe's office ten minutes ago." "Supe," be it known, is the irreverent abbreviative by which the average West Pointer in those days was wont to designate the magnate in command. That evening, at mess, the subject came up for discussion during dinner, and so completely had the thing been foreseen, and so utterly was it looked upon as a matter of course, that, except among the very youthful members present, no comment whatever was made. In that party of twenty-five or thirty officers it is probable that few were able to tell anything of the political opinions of their comrades, and there was not a man in the mess who could have classed all of them. Some had been reared in the Democratic faith, more had risen from the ranks of the Republican party; but among them only one creed was recognized in the days of which this chronicle may treat,—loyalty to the general government.

Mr. X. does not propose stopping to portray the virtue or credit of the circumstance, but, whatever might have been the individual opinions of the officers on duty at the Military Academy at that time as to the advisability of starting the lately enfranchised in the race for commis-

sions in the regular service, they took the fact that representatives were duly entered by proper authority as all-sufficient. As judges, stewards, etc., it was simply their duty to see that this new and very dark horse had a fair show, and the only question in his (Mr. X.'s) mind at this day is whether they did not overdo it.

There was no discussion at all. The youngsters held their tongues and listened when the few words of advice were spoken by the seniors, and then went off and said no more about it. One officer whose father was a strong pro-slavery man before the war *did* say, "Well, it's a free country. Uncle Sam owns the craft and hires me as one of the crew; I'll handle any freight he chooses to ship, but he's loading the old boat down to the guards this trip, sure." But there wasn't a man that more conscientiously strove to do his duty when the "freight" came than he. There was only one sentiment. It is the nation's school, and we are here to teach to the best of our ability any and all scholars the nation may send.

So much for sentiment, now for narration. One bright June morning our burly and vastly popular commandant assembled by order his four company commanders,—"tactical officers" they used to call us,—and among these was Mr. X.

On all occasions when it was necessary to be impressive, "Old Harry" was wont to assume a tragic profundity of voice, an awful solemnity,—severity of mien that to the uninitiated was something superhuman. It would cause a cadet coming into that presence as a culprit for the first time to quake in his shoes, while the little rascals of drummer-boy orderlies, who were used to it, would be so convulsed with suppressed laughter and their efforts to

keep straight faces that they would half the time bolt from his presence with no idea of the message on which they were sent. It was something that would bring out half the battalion giggling around the company officers' tents to hear the colonel arraigning his cadet officer of the day. The air was as full of boom, rumble, roar, crash, and bang as Mark Twain's description of a thunder-storm, and yet Mr. X. can recall that when he for the first time listened with stunned faculties to a reprimand administered to him as cadet adjutant, and it was dawning upon his dazed brain that a mistake in the morning return of the battalion was a crime akin to forgery, and that his chevrons were to be torn off by the roots in thirty seconds more, all of a sudden the hurricane ceased, a blessed calm stole upon the storm-swept features of the colonel and over the senses of the stripling standing attention before him, and a mild and benignant voice, coming Mr. X. wondered from where, cooed forth, "There, youngster, that's all I've got to say; now go off *and think no more about it.*" This was 'way back in cadet days, and in Old Harry's first year in the commandant's office. It is five years afterwards that he has summoned us thither again, and though the skies have changed, grim-visaged war smoothed his wrinkled front, the genial, winning, lovable old imposture is the same as ever; he has something impressive to say, and as usual proceeds to work himself up to the proper frenzy,—his heart is too soft for the task.

Knowing him well, we four are seated before him in solemn silence, with decorous and respectful glance. A shock-headed drummer-boy, Bohrer, is clumsily fumbling at the strings of the curtain, trying to let down the

shade. Bohrer is the personification of awkwardness, and on him no amount of "setting-up" ever took effect. No word is spoken as the commandant gloweringly watches his victim, for he is always storming at that boy, and letting him have double the length of time at supper to pay for it. At last his patience is exhausted. Like the resonant roar of the "light twelve" his voice thunders, "Boy!" and the hapless orderly dropping his work, starts at the word, and faces the colonel. "Out with ye!" And the youngster tumbles for the door.

Then Old Harry reviews us with a frowning gaze. One after another, slowly and deliberately, he looks us completely over, and we as solemnly look back at him. Then, slowly and majestically, he rises to the full height of his six feet four, and expands his powerful chest; then from the depths of his lungs, slow, measured, ominous, detonating in rumbling basso profundo, we hear the words, "Gentlemen, the crisis has come!"

Well, nobody seems to be disturbed somehow; all look as though they expected it of course, but no one for a moment ventures a remark. Meanwhile, sterner and sterner the regards of our ponderous chief take us in. At last, finding this sort of thing oppressive, one of our number, a Kentuckian, who has small reverence for persons and no sense of dramatic propriety, lapsing naturally into the vernacular of the blue-grass country, cheerfully pipes up, "Well, I s'pose you mean the nigger," and that furnishes Old Harry with his cue. He well-nigh blazes with pent-up consternation, but delivers his fire with telling effect. The mere use of such a word as nigger may cost a man his commission hereafter; but, to boil down the lecture to a point, we receive explicit instruc-

tions as to how those young gentlemen of color are to be received, protected, and cherished, and by noon of that day the pioneers of their race, two in number, are safely lodged in an airy room in that portion of the cadet barracks devoted to all new-comers, and the press of the nation rings with the news that the colored cadet is a fact.

Before they had been there ten days we had, as a matter of course, an outrage. Up to that time there had been no sign of turbulence among the cadets. There was great curiosity on their part to see the new-comers, but, thanks to their color, those two young aspirants were not subjected to the tormenting system of initiation then, and for years previous, in vogue at the Academy. As they arrived the "plebes" were duly marked by vigilant eyes from the barrack windows, and immediately after breaking ranks after dinner that day, or certainly after supper in the evening, those who had reported since the previous day were surrounded by an eager knot of "yearlings" and badgered with questions: "What's your name, plebe?" "What State do you represent?" "Ohio?" "Great Scott! fellows, look at this plebe; says he represents the State of Ohio." "Do you aspire to the command of troops?" "You do? Jeewhillikins! if here isn't a plebe who aspires to the command of troops! Look at him." "You don't? Then what in blazes did you come here for?" All very rough and reprehensible *sans doute*, but leveling, sir, leveling, as all good democrats would have the Academy of the nation.

The stern, Argus-eyed cadet corporals on duty over the new cadets were overpoweringly intolerant of the faintest blunder the unsoldierly muscles of the novices

were sure to make, and wrathful commentaries were as sure to follow; but all this, and much more, the Africans gazed at but took no part in. Few cadets seemed to take more notice of them than a prolonged stare, and their cadet instructors corrected their blunders in as few words as possible, and strove to set them right without fuss of any kind.

It could not be said that they were ignored, for they were the centres of attraction; and so far as officers of the tactical department were concerned, all were on the *qui vive* to see that they were unmolested. The two were a curious contrast: one a chuckling, bullet-headed little darky from Mississippi, whose great eyes would wander from object to object as though in search of something to excuse the cachination for which his soul was longing; the other a tall, slim, loose-jointed, cadaverous party, with arms and legs of extraordinary length, and an indescribable complexion, chalky-white, except in spots where the tan struck through, and occasional deeper blotches of brown; little, beady, snake-like eyes, high cheek-bones, and kinky hair, No. 2 was the personification of repulsive gloom, while little Mississippi seemed looking everywhere for a chance for fun.

In those days the cadets all repaired to a room in the barrack basement to have their shoes blacked, and sometimes just before parade or inspection the whole corps would be swarming thither. One morning the new cadets were crowded in there, the Africans among them, and the first outrage upon the colored cadet was alleged to have taken place.

According to the combined statements of the colored gentlemen from South Carolina and Mississippi, the for-

mer acting as spokesman, the latter unhesitatingly corroborating by eager nods and gestures, the circumstances were substantially as follows: When it came their turn to step upon the shoeblack's bench they had been roughly hustled off, with much abusive language, by their white classmates (no "old cadets" were present), and upon their remonstrance and reassertion of their rights to have their shoes blacked in their turn, they had been seized by the throat, hurled against the wall, and held there by certain young gentlemen, whose names they gave, who at the time drew bowie- and large pocket-knives, and threatened, with much frightful and profane emphasis, to cut their hearts out, and then drove them from the room.

The whole story looked plausible, if not probable. New cadets were always examined on arrival, to see that none had pistols or knives in their possession; a system that had been adopted of necessity in the days when the chivalry "ran" the institution, and it was not exactly credited that bowie-knives had been brandished; but the colored gentlemen were emphatic and reiterative, the Mississippian going so far as to blurt out, "Yes, sah; an'—an' pistols, too—six-shooters."

An instant investigation was ordered, and half an hour from the time the outrage occurred three officers were taking testimony in a barrack room.

Possibly because of the fact that he had been reared in the faith of abolitionism, and had been taught the crime and shame of slavery from babyhood; possibly because he represented a name that was identified with the sending forth of the first colored troops raised in our Northern land during the late Rebellion (the scene is

commemorated in the admirable painting at the Union League in New York City), it fell to Mr. X.'s lot to be the recorder of that investigation, and he entered upon the duty with every conviction in his mind that the story was true. It was just what he had been dreading, and here was the time to take the stitch that might save nine and prevent all future affairs by securing prompt punishment of the first offenders.

First to be examined were the two complainants. Hitherto they had simply backed up one another's version of the affair; now they appeared singly, South Carolina leading, and very glibly and vindictively he gave his testimony, and unflinchingly submitted to cross examination. He had done nothing whatever but simply suffer the assault. Then came little chuckle-head from Mississippi, and, deprived of the supporting presence of his spotted associate, it became evident at once that he was all afloat. Every time he told his story it differed in important detail from his previous attempt. Mr. X. argued that he was naturally excited and "flustered" by the circumstances of the morning, and secured time for his witness to "think over the matter for a while," though the board of investigators very properly declined to allow him to have a chance to compare notes with the gentleman from South Carolina, so he was temporarily relegated to a room by himself. Meantime, the six new cadets mentioned in the accusation as being prominent in the outrage were examined one by one. Their stories fitted together with exact nicety, nor had they had time to concoct one. The instant after the affair took place all the implicated parties were placed under surveillance. Six or seven eye-witnesses to the transaction were then

examined, and to a man the white cadets testified that while there had been some elbowing and shoving between New Cadet —— and the gentleman from South Carolina consequent upon a misunderstanding as to whose turn it was, no other violence took place, hardly a word was spoken, and there was no time for any outrage, as the South Carolinian loudly and excitedly called to the Mississippian to follow him the instant he stepped back or was shoved back from the bench, and together they had hurried from the room, shouting, "*Now* we'll see we get our rights," upon which the white cadets had indulged in some laughter, doubtless derisive; but one and all agreed that not a hand had been laid on the colored boys, not a knife had been drawn, and beyond the "Who are you shovin'?" remarks naturally to be expected under such circumstances, there had been no bad language of any kind. Cross-examination failed to shake their statements in the least.

Then the South Carolinian was recalled. This time the white portion of his skin looked ghastly, his beady eyes flitted in quick furtive glances from one face to another; he gave his version of the affair a third time, stolidly, sullenly, as though he knew every word was questioned and yet was bound to stick to it. He had his lesson pretty well, but slipped on several minor points in cross-examination. When the discrepancies were pointed out to him, he bit his lip, apparently strove to enlarge a knot-hole in the floor with the toe of his boot, and muttered that that was all he knew about it; he declined to say any more. He was sent to his room and the little Mississippian called in. He broke down at the second question, hung his head, giggled, stammered,

chuckled, experimented with his boot-toe on the same knot-hole, and then threw up the sponge with an air of evident relief.

Q. "Do you mean to say that your previous statement was untrue?"

A. "Ye—es, sah." (Chuckle.)

Q. "Then no knives were drawn?"

A. "No, sah."

Q. "Then, did the cadets lay hands on you or Mr. ——, or not?"

A. "No, sah; they didn't touch us."

Thereupon one of the investigating officers popped in with this question: "In plain words, was or was not your whole statement a deliberate lie?"

Mr. X. informed the gentleman from Mississippi that he need not answer that question, this was a mere preliminary investigation to see whether or no further proceedings would be necessary; but Chuckle-head was on the stool of repentance and wanted to make a clean breast of it. He unhesitatingly asseverated that he had been lying; that he and his associate had been put up to the whole performance by letters from colored friends and carpet-bag politicians, who told them to go ahead with any story they liked and they would support them. And so the bubble burst.

A few days more sufficed to close the academic career of the little Mississippian. He was unable to pass the preliminary examination for admission and dropped out, but the South Carolinian started fairly. Liar or no liar, the government was bound to give him a chance, and just as though his soul were unspotted with guile his instruction began. For three long and eventful years the aca-

demic system was drained by the suppuration kept up by this poisoned blade of the entering wedge with which its enemies had hoped to render it asunder. Then the foreign matter fell out through its own decay.

Of all the low, tricky, vindictive bipeds that walked the earth, it would have been difficult for the "friends of the movement" to have selected a specimen better qualified to carry out their plans. Time and again he was court-martialed for offenses for which a white cadet would have been sent out neck and crop; but though found guilty and sentenced to dismissal, and though the high authorities at Washington were compelled to admit the absolute justice of the findings and sentence, and to stamp them with their approval, yet was the whole government of the United States so committed to this political experiment that the Secretary of War was compelled to announce in general orders that "the policy of the administration could not admit of the dismissal of this cadet at the present time" (or words to that effect), and directed his restoration to duty. The darky felt his importance, and acted accordingly. He would vent his hatred on the old cadets (who ignored him) by kicking their shins as he marched behind them in ranks,—a proceeding they could not resent at the time, and reporting him did no good; he would deny or excuse it on the plea of accident; it was useless to court-martial, and if other means were resorted to—well, here's what followed:

Sitting in his office as the battalion came marching back from supper one winter's evening, Mr. X. noticed some stir and disorder in Company "A" as it broke ranks; a moment later the colored cadet rushed into his presence all excitement.

"Mr. X., I claim your protection. I am in fear of my life."

Mr. X. assures the claimant that no harm shall come to him, and requests further explanation. The darky states that on breaking ranks he had been violently assaulted by Cadet Dillard (let us say), pursued to his room, and there beaten and abused until he made his escape and flew to the officer in charge for succor.

Mr. X. sends an orderly for Cadet Dillard, who promptly appears,—a tall, soldierly Kentuckian. "You are accused of having assaulted Cadet —— on breaking ranks. What have you to say?"

"It is true, sir. I'm sorry, but I could not help it. He was kicking me all the way from the mess-hall. He had done it time and again, and at last I lost my temper. He ran as we broke ranks, and I was foolish and furious enough to follow and cuff his ears for him. He isn't hurt, sir, half as much as I am." (That was evident, as Dillard limped, and —— hadn't a mark.)

"Very well, Mr. Dillard; go to your quarters in arrest." And the Kentuckian, humiliated in the very presence of his tormentor (Mr. X. uses the word advisedly), faces about, and goes direct to his enforced confinement. The feeling gained ground among the cadets at that time that the institution was run solely in the interest of the colored man, and that Mr. X. was a "nigger worshiper."

A year before this occurrence, in making his inspection of the cadets' mess-hall at dinner-time, Mr. X. noticed that there was no "commandant of table" among the cadets seated with the gentleman from South Carolina. "Where is Mr. Hayden?" (let us call *him*) asked

Mr. X. of the cadet corporal at the end of the table. The young fellow looked embarrassed, and replied that he thought he was somewhere in the mess-hall.

The "commandant of table" was a cadet lieutenant of Company "A," that to which the colored cadet belonged, and it was the duty of this young officer to preserve order at his table, and to see that all cadets were satisfactorily supplied with the rations to which they were equally entitled. Some recent newspaper articles had asserted that the new colored cadet was starved, deliberately deprived of food and drink, and so the "officers in charge" were constantly hovering about his table to see that nothing of this kind could happen. Only a few days before, the new cadet squads had been broken up and their members distributed among the company tables. In a few moments Mr. X. came upon Cadet Lieutenant Hayden seated at a table in another part of the hall, and ordered him to go at once to his own place.

"Mr. X.," says the cadet, respectfully, but in evident excitement, "I saw the superintendent yesterday, and *he promised me that this matter should be settled, so that I would not have to sit with the colored cadet.*"

Probably Cadet Hayden so understood the superintendent, but it made no difference in the final result. Mr. X. reported the dereliction of duty to the commandant of cadets, and that night at parade the cadet lieutenant was shorn of his sword, plume, sash, and gold lace, and returned to the ranks side by side with the colored gentleman near whom he had declined to sit and eat.

Now, Mr. X. liked that cadet; furthermore, Mr. X. liked some young ladies who also liked that cadet, and of course, when this affair took place, there were several

highly-cultivated dames and damsels of very good Republican parentage or connections who looked askance at Mr. X. from that time forth as a man who wanted to make "their Hayd" sit and eat with a low negro.

Many a good laugh have we had when roughing it together on the Yellowstone (Hayden and X. being the we in question), for, whatever may have been the disgust of his friends, H. was too good a soldier not to know that it was purely a matter of duty on X.'s part.

These incidents are mentioned merely as specimens of the efforts made to enforce the rights of this pioneer of the colored race at the Academy. That Mr. X. was thrown more constantly into disagreeable relations with somebody or other in consequence of the principle involved was simply characteristic of the ill luck which pursued him. He it was who most frequently unearthed such lapses of discipline and, reporting them, secured the punishment of the cadet and the undying hatred of that cadet's friends.

Such letters as used to come in those days! Ku-Kluxism was then in its heyday in the South, and the vile, misspelled, profane, obscene, and abusive epistles that were constantly received by the commandant, and frequently by Mr. X., the gentle reader would not care to see in print. We laughed at those bristling fulminations from the land of cane and cotton; but every now and then came letters from men of education,—gentlemen who propounded a series of questions,—who wanted to know whether we did not think we were teaching that darky to believe himself a heaven-born superior. Would we really introduce him to our own wives and sisters? Admitting his political rights, was it wise in the govern-

ment to seek to educate the negro to a position of command? etc., etc. All traps to "draw us out."

It was easy enough to answer and say that officers at the Academy were not there to decide whether the action of the government was wise or not, and that so long as their official relations towards the cadets, white or colored, were those prescribed by law and regulations, their personal opinions were of no earthly consequence to any one.

But swarms of people kept coming to the Point and poking their noses into everybody's affairs, on the general plea of interesting themselves in the welfare of that colored cadet. Reporters were buzzing about the post incessantly, but their feats of impudence and mendacity would require a volume. Next to them in rank as nuisances came the strong-minded women, and the American editions of the genus Stiggins, who claimed to represent the Methodist or Baptist faith. Somehow or other Mr. X. was incessantly detailed to meet and receive these gentry, the members of the Press, Sorosis, and the Pulpit, and an awful life they led him. There was no matter beneath their notice,—there was no subject into which they did not pry. The Academy was at their mercy now, for under cover of the interest which all American citizens were supposed to be taking in the colored cadet, these harpies of modern civilization swooped down upon the post, and even the personal homes of the officers' families were invaded by them in their hungry curiosity. "It is the property of the nation, sir," as one ponderous divine remarked, "and the public demands accurate information as to its internal management."

Mr. X. tried to be polite to the reporters,—some of

them deserved it too,—and generally, after showing them over the post, as he was directed by his superiors, he offered them the refreshments of the mess. One day he had three of them in tow, and was as civil as could be to each and all. Three days after, the superintendent sent for him, and proceeded to read the following extracts:

"Through the courtesy of the efficient superintendent, General ——, your commissioner was escorted around the post, taken to the cadet barracks, and very hospitably entertained by Lieutenant X., a young officer of marked intelligence and ability, who seemed eager to open every avenue of information, and who promptly answered all inquiry bearing upon the much-vexed question of the colored cadet. Subsequently, Lieutenant X. introduced us to a number of officers stationed at the Point, and it was impossible not to recognize the courtesy of manner which distinguished them, and the utter freedom from that *hauteur* and snobbishness which has been alleged to be their characteristic."

"Now, that's all very well, Mr. X.," said the chief; "but now look here; this is what the *Moon* says:"

"The superintendent somewhat gruffly turned us over to the tender mercies of a beardless stripling, whom he introduced as Lieutenant X., and who lost no time in impressing your reporter with the fact that to strut and swagger in a tight-fitting uniform was about the extent of the information he had acquired in a four years' schooling at the nation's expense. This pigmy second lieutenant professed to believe that the colored cadet had been fairly treated by the officers, but was unable to point to any circumstance as sustaining his argument; and finding it impossible to extract any useful information from such a source, your reporter desisted. . . .

"Subsequently, and doubtless with the hope of securing the favorable notice of the *Moon*, your reporter was escorted to the officers' club-room, where a party of consequential young dandies, without an unmortgaged dollar in their pockets, were regaling themselves with brandy-smashes and thirty-cent Partagas. No wonder justice is not to be obtained for the scholars chosen by the voice of the people to represent them at the nation's academy, when its instructors are selected from so vapid, empty-headed, and bigoted a class of young snobs."

"What did you do to offend the *Moon* man, Mr. X.? I thought you had sense enough to be civil to these d—d nuisances," says the superintendent.

Mr. X. says he does not know; the three of them were together, and he treated them exactly alike. "Better send somebody else around with the next batch," he suggests.

Two days after, the *Moon* man comes up again, and X. and others refuse to recognize him, whereupon a brother journalist volunteers this explanation: "We are not responsible for these things; what we come here for is simply the facts in the case, then when we get back *we color them up whichever way we are told.*" So much for the reporters.

Of the swarm of visitors then attracted to the Academy, it may be said that they were guided by the Press as to the objects of interest to be seen at West Point. Monuments, trophies, battle-flags, the pictures, the library and museum, the lovely scenery, were passed over with disparaging comment and *blasé* indifference,—a new order of things obtained; and as a result of constant observation, Mr. X. is able to state that among all the parties whom it was his delight and privilege to show around the Point, nine out of ten would eagerly desire to see, first, the colored cadet; second, Fred Grant; after that, anything as it came along.

This tendency on the part of our visitors gave rise to some harmless pleasantries on the part of their military *cicerones*. Cadet Hayden, aforementioned, whose dark complexion rendered plausible coloring to the deception, was not infrequently pointed out by his comrades as the genuine colored cadet, and Fred Grant and the colored

gentleman were made to do duty for one another a dozen times. "You see," explained Lieutenant Wag, of the engineers, "this is so thoroughly democratic an institution that one cadet is just as good as another, and I really know very few of them apart." To allay all possibility of acrimonious criticism on the part of avowedly strong levelers of any distinction between races, it was found a safe and soothing expedient to point out the commanding officer at parade, or else the drum-major, when the customary inquiry came for the colored cadet. People who could actually go away and say they had seen the despised African in positions of absolute prominence and command were always glad to do so, provided neither themselves nor their remotest relations were among his supposed subordinates.

One rainy morning Mr. X. was putting the first classmen, whose graduation was near at hand, through a lively exercise in the riding-hall. Bareback and with stirrups crossed the cadets were leaping their horses over hurdles, and slashing at leather heads with their sabres, to the nervous admiration of numerous visitors in the gallery. Then the seniors withdrew, and the second classmen appeared, and they, too, performed various feats in equitation, to the delight of the lookers-on. At the close of the second drill, as Mr. X. was leaving the hall, he was accosted by the spokesman of a large party of what appeared to be students of some theological seminary. The spokesman was tall, pompous, gray-bearded, and impressive. "Sir," said he, while he pointed his cane square at his victim, and his satellites, male and female, listened in wrapt attention,—"sir, permit me to detain you one moment. I observed that the colored

cadet was not among your pupils this morning. At what time does he receive his instruction in horsemanship?"

"Not at all as yet; he is only a fourth class——"

"I thought as much; I *said* as much," broke in the spokesman, while his flock admiringly held their breath and watched the demolition of the victim with all apparent delight. "You exclude this young man from participation in equestrianism, as you do from other rights too numerous to mention, simply on account of his color; and yet, I suppose you consider that you are doing your duty as an instructor at the Military Academy," etc.

Mr. X. was allowed no opportunity to explain that not until their second year at the Academy were *any* cadets instructed in riding. The ecclesiastic had the floor, and did not propose to yield it until he had exhausted the subject. Life and temper were both too fleeting to stay and listen. Mr. X. beat a retreat.

But now we come to another and very different source of tribulation. Mr. X. approaches the subject with all diffidence, if indeed that diffidence do not fall short of absolute timidity. In all the time he was on duty at the Academy, in all the varied experiences there encountered, there was one trial in face of which superintendent, commandant, the academic staff, and the tactical department shrank in common,—the ambitious mamma of an only son, that son being a cadet.

Time was when the fact of being the only son of a widowed mother was valid ground for exemption from military duty, and, in the light of events herein chronicled, Mr. X. declares it to be his conviction that at the Military Academy it should constitute absolute ground of exclusion.

In nine cases out of ten that solitary chicken of the fussy old hen has been petted, spoiled, and pampered from babyhood. His digestion has been ruined by the sweets and lollipops demanded by his infantile majesty and all too readily accorded by his over-indulgent parent; his frame is feeble and puny, because his boyhood has been passed on the periphery described, with the maternal apron-string as a radius; his temper and disposition are querulous, exacting, and tyrannical. He has known no rough schooling among boys of his age; he has never learned either independence or self-denial; he has been reared, the tender, sensitive plant, by his nurses and his mother, whom he has alternately cajoled and bullied; and yet just such a weakling as this sometimes takes a notion into his head that he would like to go to West Point and be a soldier. Doubtless there is a scene when he announces this fact to mamma, but she has too long been accustomed to yielding to Sammy's every whim, and, after a few days of tears and entreaties, she succumbs. Such a mother is never without influence at Washington. Pertinacity will accomplish as much there as elsewhere, and in the days whereof we write every year brought on two or three mother-escorted boys to take their initiation. Generally the appointment was wrung from a reluctant but powerless President. Be that as it may, they were sure to arrive every June.

Other boys came sturdily alone, went at once to the adjutant's office, reported, and were turned over to the commandant of new cadets for drill; but with Sammy and his mamma it was different, and they, mind you, are merely representatives of a class. They go to the hotel, from which point madame dispatches a bell-boy with her

card to the superintendent and other officers, for, depend upon it, she has come armed with letters of introduction to half a score of them, and nothing will satisfy her but that she may personally present her aspiring son to each and every one. Nor will she permit him to "report" until this ceremony has been effected. Then, when he *does* go, she marches protectingly by his side, and, up to the very moment when he is ushered into the cadet barracks, never leaves him, and then only to return to the hotel to plot and plan for his interests. Within twenty-four hours she has succeeded in making the acquaintance of every man and woman on the Point who can have the faintest influence over Sammy's future career as a cadet. She button-holes the commandant with long stories of the heroic deeds of Sammy's ancestors, and of the passion for a military life that beset him from earliest boyhood. Somebody remarks that the boy looks pale and feeble, and that the surgeons may reject him, whereupon she descends upon those luckless "saw-bones" (with letters), and besieges them individually and collectively with dissertations upon Sammy's superb constitution,—"never had a sick day in his life," and as for his muscular development, why, Doctor Hammond, whom you *must* know, has always said it was marvelous in a boy of his age, etc., etc. In the days of which we write it was the custom to start the new cadets on their drill as fast as they arrived; the examinations came later, and on the very next day after his reception at barracks Sammy made his appearance in a brown linen jacket three sizes too large for him, and a squad of lusty youngsters, fresh from the farm, whose ruddy faces and clear eyes only served to make his sallow complexion

look the more ghastly in comparison. Of course madame was on hand, following every movement of that squad, and the miseries of Sammy when undergoing the process of "setting up" were too much for her. She seized upon the officer in charge with voluble protestations. It was a shame to require her boy to go through such gyrations; he had been drilled all his life; he took all the prize medals at Churchill's school, and the Seventh Regiment used to send for him to come and teach their companies—or squads, which was it? it was hideous to make him drill with those hobbledehoys; he was perfectly competent to take his place at once among the old cadets at parade: pointing him out as he came awkwardly stumbling over the heels of his front-rank man marching down to supper, and wondering that in the sallow, hollow-cheeked, and hollow-chested lad no one seemed to detect the latent martial heroism of which she so volubly assured them. In one class there came three such boys with three such mothers, and then there was a little relief, for they soon grew to cordially hate one another, and that gave them something else to talk about; but 'tis of the representative madame mère we are speaking now. The officer who had been assigned the duty of superintending new cadet squad drills began to dread the rapidly-recurring hours for that exercise. She was sure to be there, to "corral" him somewhere, to petition for Sammy's relief from such unnecessary humiliation as to have to drill with a lot of raw boys. Sammy plainly didn't like it, and between-times was to be seen wandering dismally about the Point with his mamma, pouring his plaint into her ready ears. Then she began to assail the commander on the subject. It was in vain that official patiently

assured her that no cadet ever entered West Point, much less was ever graduated, without having to go through the same rigorous drill. She persisted that it was unnecessary with Sammy,—"he was the very best scholar at Peachlawn Military Academy," though the fact was patent to all who cared to look that the boy was slouchy, stooping, and awkward in the last degree: he seemed to have no elasticity whatever. Then madame declared that his health was suffering from the cruelty and severity of his cadet drill-master, and called attention to his own pallor and the cadet's flushed countenance. The latter was having by far the harder time of the two, for "Sammy's" stupidity was ruining the appearances of his squad and all chance for corporalship. Madame desired to have her boy excused then on the ground of ill health, and had well-nigh succeeded, when it was whispered to her, *malheureusement*, that this would lead to his being declared physically disqualified when he came up for examination before the surgeons. Realizing that a false step had been made, madame eagerly sought acquaintance with the surgeons, and pumped them full of information as to the vigor of that youngster's boyhood, explaining that he had never known a sick day (though the poor fellow subsequently admitted he had been well-nigh raised on medicines), and that his droop and pallor were due entirely to mental distress at being so ignominiously treated. Sammy got through after a fashion; was launched into the troublous sea of "plebe" camp; was soon recognized as an out-and-out "tenderfoot;" drills, guard, and "police" were too severe for him. Once inside the lines, he was safe, and now madame developed the fact that from babyhood something had

been the matter with his heart, or his lungs,—or was it his liver? Sammy's longest walks were to the hospital to get excused: recognized by the other cadets as invalided, he was let alone, and his heaviest burden was the sick-book. Through his Plebe year he crawled in much the same fashion, suffering from some mysterious malady when it came his turn for guard duty, refusing the solid fare of the mess-hall at supper, and requiring the more dainty dishes to be had at "the Dutchman's." Sammy was generally to be found there after evening parade, but alone,—the only cadet in the battalion, probably, who had the face to partake of Mrs. Renner's good cheer without a sharing comrade. Both his examinations and his examiners were superintended by madame, whose tongue by this time was known and feared all over the vicinity. Young officers whose misfortune it was to have to instruct Sammy, and, as a consequence, to spur him at times to make him keep pace with his comrades, began to find themselves mysteriously losing ground in friendships and in hitherto cordial relations with neighboring families. Months or years after, in many cases, the explanation was given: "Well, I heard, from what I then considered good authority, that you had said," etc., etc. (needless to explain that there was a lady in *that* case). But madame was a ruthless enemy. Her motto was, "Either for or against me," and the instructor or cadet who was not in some way actively bolstering up the nerveless cause of her nondescript was handled mercilessly as woman's tongue and ingenuity could devise. Why was it that Mr. X.'s company was the one of the four into which these hen-governed striplings seemed to fall? Luck; nothing but luck, of the worst kind. Were

he to live a thousand years he could never forget the scene after parade the bright June evening when the cadet officers' appointments were published, and Sammy's name was not among them.

"Hell (hath) no fury like a woman scorned," unless it was madame when some twenty young gentlemen of Sammy's class were decorated with corporal's chevrons, but none for Sammy. What made it worse was that eight of the twenty had been chosen from Mr. X.'s company. Nearly all his "yearlings" had been appointed, but not Sammy. For a year the boy had gone through such duties as he could not get excused from, in a style more dead than alive: he was always dismal, slow, and, for a cadet, slovenly; always late at roll-calls, sleeping through reveille, having contraband eatables in his room, in his clothes-box, candle-box, or up the chimney; his belts were never trim and fresh, his accoutrements were always dusty or shabby. With more clothes and far more money than his companions, he never succeeded in imitating their trim, soldierly, faultless dress and carriage; he was always blundering on drill, going half asleep on parade, and twice narrowly escaped being caught asleep on guard; yet the blessed mother-eye could see naught but perfection, and rage was in her heart and malice on her lips when she saw him unappointed.

"*May* I ask, sir, upon what principle you select your corporals?" demanded she of the unhappy Mr. X., as that young officer was vainly striving to dodge past her at the hotel that evening. The halls were swarming with people, and, as madame had already been ventilating her opinions on the subject previous to his arrival, Mr.

X. found that a dozen or more maliciously delighted listeners were gathered within ear-shot. "Perhaps," she continued, not waiting for his reply,—"perhaps you would have us understand that *principle* doesn't enter into the matter at all." X. humbly protests that only the superintendent has power to appoint, and that she must appeal to that magnate for information; but the device is too transparent. She knows well enough that the recommendations of the company commanders are the basis of selection, and goes on with her tirade. "It is time the War Department was informed of the outrageous system of favoritism and partiality some officers maintain here. I suppose *you* would have had your colored *protégé* made first corporal,—ha-ha-ha!" and with a fine burst of derisive laughter she sweeps victorious from the scene.

"Well, X.," says the commandant, cheerily, next morning, "I hear the panther clawed your eyes out last night," and all the tactical department joins in the laugh at the junior's expense. "All right, gentlemen, laugh ahead," is the lugubrious response; "your turn will come."

But it did not seem to. Being the junior, Mr. X. found that it fell to his lot to have unpleasant duties thrust upon his shoulders which the seniors objected to, and Sammy was not the only mamma's boy who was handed over to his care. Sammy was enough of a trial, however,—when taken in conjunction with the Panther, —to eclipse all others. Once a third-class man, his career of contemptuous disregard for regulations fairly began. Lates, absences, dirty belts, boots, floors, etc., rapidly rolled up against him, and many a time did

Mr. X. figure as reporting officer. "He is persecuting my boy on every possible occasion," said the Panther to the professors. "He is always sneaking around to catch him at something, and reporting him on suspicion if he cannot," was her way of putting it to the ladies. (Bless their hearts! they always told Mr. X. of it for fear she would say it to him herself.) "He prowls round the barracks at midnight when gentlemen are asleep, just to see if he cannot get an excuse to inspect Sammy's room," was another allegation.

Night inspections of the cadets' rooms were required once a week, at least, of the four company commanders, the object being to see that the cadets were present, that no lights were burning after ten o'clock, that no cooking or "visiting" was going on. Great hands the cadets were in those days at getting up contraband suppers in their rooms, stewing oysters or "hash" over the gas, and spilling the unlawful comestibles in greasy confusion on the floors; and of all such accomplishments Sammy was a tireless exponent. There was more of it going on at all times in his room than anywhere else. "He could not bear the coarse food of the mess-hall," mamma explained, "and needed the delicacies to which he had been accustomed." So it often happened that Sammy was caught *in flagrante delictu* and promptly demerited. There was nothing vicious in it, *per se*, and other cadets caught in the same way took their demerit marks and three or four "punishment tours" without a murmur; but this Sammy declined to do. Cadets in addition to their "demerits" were awarded by the superintendent on the weekly punishment list two, three, or four "extras," as they were called, or a similar number of confinements. The "extra"

was a nuisance. On Saturday afternoons at two o'clock all cadets awarded that punishment appeared equipped and armed as sentinels, and each was assigned a post or "beat" in the area of barracks, up and down which he must silently walk until time for evening parade,—sometimes four hours. X. remembers to have seen as many as sixty or seventy of the corps so disporting themselves in the long spring afternoons, and, while few utterly escaped them, there were some cadets who were always there. When Sammy had tried two or three of these and still had a dozen to "walk off," he decided that the thing was an imposition. So mamma's services were called into requisition. She was making her head-quarters somewhere around New York just then, and took to coming up on the noon train. Then Sammy would get a permit excusing him from "extra" because of his mother's sudden arrival, she having to go back in the evening. This worked well for a fortnight, but between times the youth was rolling up more of them, and the commandant called the superintendent's attention to the fact that while other cadets were serving out their punishments Sammy was getting off scot free; so it was ordered that when excused on Saturday he should walk Sunday afternoon. This was an unchristian barbarity that no mother could stand; there were a number of cadets whose array of punishment "kept them on" both days, but the Panther was up in arms by first train and interviewed the superintendent. That boy "had been brought up in the shadow of the church, and should not be forced to see his day of rest turned into a tread-mill," she argued; "he had always observed it as a holy day."

The superintendent grimly pointed to the record for

a Sunday within the month whereon Sammy, excused from church by reason of headache, had worshiped and glorified by tearing around the resounding halls of barracks with two cavalry sabres, "hived" for the occasion, clattering after him, and making the peaceful morning hideous by rolling the policeman's iron buckets down the iron stairways, to the great discomfiture of the "plebe" sentinel on the lower floor. The Panther of course declared this statement to be a malicious invention of Mr. X.'s,—who was the reporting officer,—but the evidence was against her. She left in some discomfiture, but in no wise conquered. Then we heard of her in Washington, and pretty soon Sunday extras were stopped; but the superintendent substituted two confinements for each extra. A cadet confined for punishment was compelled to remain in his room from 2 P.M. until first drum for parade on Saturdays or Sundays. All Sammy's Sunday extras being converted into confinements, placed him on the list of victims for months to come, with a number of Saturday punishments still to walk off and "more a-coming." Finding it impossible to get excused beforehand from these Saturday tribulations any longer, Sammy resorted to another dodge. He would take his post at two o'clock, walk till 2.30, then call for the corporal of the guard for relief, and present himself pale and depressed to the officer in charge for permission to go to the hospital and get excused as too ill to stand it. After a few successes, this game was blocked by the order that a cadet should not be considered as having served his punishment tour unless he "walked off" the allotted number of hours.

Spring came, and mamma with it, to stay a while. A

room had been set apart next the commandant's office, in which relations of cadets could see them during study-hours for ten minutes, or so, on making their wishes known to the "officer in charge," and on Saturdays and Sundays cadets on extra or confinement were allowed to meet relations when the latter arrived, but were limited to fifteen minutes.

One balmy Saturday late in April, Mr. X., being officer in charge, had disposed his skirmish-line of extra men in the area, and was in conversation with Captain Sanford, when the latter, glancing out of the window towards the sally-port, exclaimed, "Great Scott! X., you're in for it,—*here comes the Panther.* Good-by, old fellow: take care of yourself," and was off like a shot. Another minute, and the orderly ushered in madame, majestic, formidable, basket-laden. "I wish to see my son; the superintendent has deigned to grant his permission, sir," was her only remark to Mr. X., who *could* not escape, but now went to give the necessary orders for Sammy's temporary release. When the fifteen minutes were up it was necessary to send a messenger to remind the youth that orders were orders. X. knew that if he did it there would be the devil to pay, but his instructions were explicit. Sammy went ruefully back to his post, and madame whisked her heavy silks past the cap-raising officer in charge with no more notice than a glare; but didn't she haul his unhappy name in the mire for all time thereafter?

It was Sammy's last extra, though. Madame never left the Point until she had succeeded in persuading the surgeons that her boy's health absolutely demanded his release from such punishment: so they advised that his

extras be changed to confinements, and they were. Then she sailed in to prove that he was suffering for lack of exercise, and that he must not be confined to his room in the afternoons; but the authorities held that if he needed exercise he ought not to be so constantly excused from drills as he was, on plea of headache, and the confinements stuck. Then madame left us again for a brief spell,—we knew not whither she had gone,—but May was then with us. Sammy and his classmates were wild with excitement over the near approach of the long-expected ten weeks' furlough to which those who had behaved themselves would be entitled after the June examination, and we prayed that she might not return meantime. But she did, and in a hurry too.

One night Sammy was missing. An inspection at 11 P.M. revealed the fact that he was not in his room, nor did his room-mate know where he was. According to regulations, the cadet officer of the day was routed out and ordered to "inspect for him every half-hour." This young officer in the performance of this duty was compelled to sit up all night, and was swearing mad when, just before reveille, Mr. Sammy sauntered into the area of barracks.

"Where the mischief have you been, Sam? Don't you know you're 'hived absent'? Here I've been after you ever since taps."

Sammy turns white, for he knows that he is in for a scrape this time. It means dismissal, unless he can say he was not off cadet limits. That morning at nine o'clock the cadet adjutant was seen to leave the commandant's office, go to his own quarters, and presently reappear in his full uniform, with plume, sash, and sword. Every

cadet in the corps knew what that meant: somebody to be placed in arrest. The adjutant made a bee-line for "C" Company's quarters. His sword was heard clinking against the iron stairs up to the third floor, a door opened and closed, then the sword came clinking down again. The erect cadet figure stalked back to the first division, and when Bentz's bugle summoned the sections to form for second recitation at 9.30, the whole battalion knew that Sammy was caged.

Next morning the commandant was summoned over to the superintendent's office. In ten minutes he returned to his quartette of assistants. "Well, gentlemen, Mrs. —— has come, and, X., you've got to go and see her. *She's waiting for you at the hotel.*"

> "Was there a man dismayed?
> Not though the soldier knew
> Some one had blunder'd.
> Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and——"

X. often wondered what his sensations would be when ordered to charge a battery. He thinks it a bagatelle to such duty as was assigned him, and so sought to temporize. Hadn't he been thrust into this particular imminent deadly breach as often as was his due? Wasn't it some one else's turn? "Perhaps so," says the commandant, "but, you see, she got Sammy's telegram yesterday, —she has just arrived, too much prostrated, she says, to come to the superintendent, and he won't go. In fact—hang it! X.—the boy's in your company, and you've got to go and explain the matter to her."

X. goes on his mission with sinking heart. Half-way up to the hotel he catches sight of the prostrated lady marching up and down the piazza. As he enters the inclosure she faces him and halts (*horresco referens!* I see her yet): his face is pale with dismay, hers with pent-up wrath. A crowd of curious visitors is idling about the porticoes, and madame sweeps forward like a Meg Merrilies in black. "Good-morning, Mrs. ——," falters poor X. "Good-morning, sir, indeed! WHAT *have you done to my boy?*"

Ah well! Years have rolled by since then, and no especial pleasure is to be derived from this reminiscence. Mr. X. decides to dismiss it with the brief conclusion that, odd as it may appear to those who have worn the cadet gray, our Sammy escaped without court-martial. Nothing could exceed the energy, vim, and final success of that indomitable woman. For three days and nights she flew back and forth between the Point and Washington. Then it transpired that Sammy had been guilty of no unavoidable breach of discipline,—the poor boy had been suffering from an attack of palpitation, or paralysis, or something of the heart. The night was hot and sultry, not a breath of air stirring, and so, unable to sleep in barracks, "he had wandered out on the plain and spent a wretched night in pacing to and fro," all of which with much earnestness and volubility madame had repeated again and again to every one in authority, and with telling effect. Sam wrote an explanation setting forth that he had not been off "cadet limits," but vouchsafed no further remark; all that was left to mamma. Some comment was excited by the fact that he had not gone to the hospital, his invariable resort at such, and

many other, times, as also by the spontaneous reply of the cavalry sentinels when questioned the next day that none of them had seen anything of any cadet on the plain that night. But shortly after madame's arrival she was informed of this statement of the sentinels, and within ten hours Privates Kelly and Mulligan remembered that as they were coming home on pass, about midnight, they saw a cadet leaning against a tree over near the flag-staff, apparently sick, and McFadden, of the second relief, come to think of it, saw a young feller in the old mortar-battery sitting there two hours nearly. The case was decided in Washington before it was fairly opened at the Point, and, unless it was Mr. X., nobody suffered. Indeed, as the Panther fiercely assured the denizens of the Academy, "The thing never would have occurred at all if it hadn't been for that horrid little martinet," which every mother, except one, accepted, doubtless, as gospel truth.

As Mr. X. previously remarked, madame was only the type of a class. We had many very like her, though not quite so bad. Sammy's mother was the acknowledged leader of the lot, and she was the terror of the post. The mere announcement of her arrival at the hotel was sometimes sufficient to cause the superintendent to take to his bed, and the post-surgeon to betake himself to New York, for the latter was a martyr to her interminable harangues about that delicate chest, or throat, or something or other with which her bantling was afflicted, and by reason of which he should be excused from duty. Once the junior doctor had the temerity to suggest that as Sammy was, according to her account, such a physical wreck, it would be impossible for the medical board

to "pass" him on his graduation; but it was the most unhappy remark "Squills" ever ventured, for he had bearded a lioness in her den, yea, even in the defense of her sickly cub, and ere long his life was made a burden to him, and his reputation, personally and professionally, began mysteriously to run down-hill.

Thackeray makes old Major Pendennis hold to the creed of never trusting, above all, never offending a woman, and Mr. X. strove in solemn earnest not to offend this one, but all to no purpose; he was a representative of the tyrannical and outrageous system by which Sammy was brought to punishment, and so—fell under the ban. It would be useless to describe here the ingenuity with which she pursued him, or the scrapes in which he became involved. Years have elapsed since then. Requies*cat* in pace.

Soon after our pioneer African's admission to the Academy a change had taken place in the position of commandant of cadets. Our genial old Harry, after five years of valuable service, had been relieved, and the summer of 1870 brought with it the new incumbent. We were in camp when he arrived, and he was soon domiciled in our midst, as much at home as though he had been among us for a year. Professionally, and by name, he was known to every soldier, regular or State guardsman, throughout the United States. Personally, he had but slight acquaintance with the officers of the tactical department, only the senior and junior having ever met him before. Mr. X. is well aware that now he diverges far from the original channel of these articles, and that what follows is in no way appropriate to the title, but, writing of West Point in and after 1870, he can think of

nothing without thinking of Upton, and, thinking of him, it is hard not to write.

It was in 1866 that X. first knew him: the general was then at West Point busy with the preparation of his first system of tactics, and X., a young enthusiast on such subjects, living close to him in the "officers' angle" of barracks, was accustomed to spend many an hour listening to the exposition of his plans. He had not known the general a week before the conviction dawned upon him that Upton possessed three characteristics to an almost abnormal extent,—frankness, nervous energy, and tireless application. The close acquaintance and friendship that followed years afterwards served only to strengthen that conviction. He came to us in deep mourning in 1870; the recent death of his dearly-loved wife had thrown a pall over his life and hope, but it was evident that he had determined so to environ himself with incessant occupation as to crush out any possibility of morbid mourning. He was even gentler, more subdued in manner than when X. knew him four years before, and though the winning smile was rarer by far, it was none the less kindly and genial when it came. Upton's smile was something that in all these long years of separation X. has never forgotten. His eyes were fully as much involved as the firm mouth under its heavy moustache; indeed, Upton's eyes were more indicative of his mood than the mouth, for that was almost hidden.

The first thing the corps of cadets discovered with reference to Upton was that he was desperately in earnest. He detected a certain element of "slouchiness" among the upper class men, and set to work to crush it out. X. well remembers the horror and indignation with

which certain first class men received the order to attend "setting-up" drill until they could learn to carry themselves erect. Some begged permission to remonstrate with their new commandant, but they might as well have talked to the statue of Sedgwick. In ten days the corps had settled down to the dismal realization that here was a man over whom they "couldn't come it" in the least.

X. had served under and known several commandants, but none like Upton. He was by long odds the strictest and most exacting. He was the firmest in his convictions and the most immovable in his decisions. Once determined on a certain move he would carry it through, even at times when he knew that, had he to do it over again, his course would have been different. He was never disheartened, never out of patience, and X. never saw him out of temper. Being in mourning that first summer, the general rarely went anywhere, and spent his evenings in camp. It so happened that X. too was something of a hermit then, and in this way they were thrown together; acquaintance ripened into friendship, and that continued until the rude disruption at the hand of death that came this spring. X. turns sadly enough to his huge scrap-book, wherein grouped together are a number of letters, some of this very year, in the utterly indescribable chirography of the general,—Rufus Choate hardly wrote a hand more unpicturesque,—and there too is a heavy envelope bearing his superscription and addressed to the Presidio, across which are the simple words, "Too late." All last winter (1880–81) we had been in correspondence about the revision,—the revision that now will never trouble him more.

After camp was over and Mr. X. with the battalion

moved into barracks, the general filled his house with company, relatives of his wife and their friends, and so it happened that he was often compelled to give up his own room. Many and many a night in the winter of 1870 and 1871 has he appeared at X.'s rooms in the angle, where his bed was always ready for him. That was his harbor of refuge when crowded out by his own hospitality; and here it was that the friendship ripened almost into intimacy. The first night he came was but the pattern of all that followed. We talked for half an hour or so, then Upton quietly arose, took from his breast-pocket a small Bible, seated himself near the lamp and read in silence awhile, and then when ready for bed he knelt in prayer, and continued on his knees a long time. In all the nights he spent with X. this was never neglected, for Upton was as fervent and earnest in his faith as he was in every detail of his duty.

The corps did not like him. Cadets seldom *do* like an officer who is thorough in the performance of his duty. The graceless young scamps dubbed him "the Christian soldier," as though there were a possibility of reproach in the combination of terms, and taxed their brains to invent doggerel rhymes at his expense, which they sang when they thought he could hear them and *not* detect the singers; but of all this buffoonery Upton was to all appearance serenely unconscious, no word or sign ever betrayed that he even heard the words. There were certain cadet traditions and customs that had existed in his day, and in 1870 still obtained in the corps, against which he declared vigorous war, and thereby intensified the feeling against him among the cadets. They could not but respect him, he was so fair, square, and utterly

impartial, but they disliked him all the same for his relentless discipline. Upton knew this perfectly well, and never made the faintest change or concession to alter the sentiment. He was as strong and independent a man as ever lived, and, whether among the cadets or his officers, unswerving in the enforcement of regulations.

There was only one point in his mental armor that did not seem absolutely impervious. Allusion has been made to the fact that he ordered all cadets, from first class men down, who were not erect and soldierly in carriage to attend setting-up drill, and Upton himself was not erect. There was a decided roundness of back between the shoulders that gave him almost the appearance of being stoop-shouldered, a fact quickly seized upon and exaggerated by the cadets. In those days he was thin and spare, and his face, deeply lined and seamed, was soldierly in the last degree, but the moment he rose to his feet the defect in his back and shoulders became apparent, and he knew it. On horseback it was worse yet. Upton was what is called a *loose* rider; he used one of the huge saddles, with *schabraque* and housings such as were affected by the general officers during the late war, and "rode over the pommel." Bending way forward as he did, the stoop of the shoulders was exaggerated, and he never appeared to so little advantage as when in the saddle. Whether his wounds were the cause of this or whether the defect was constitutional X. never knew, but that Upton was conscious of it he feels convinced, because the general told him he knew it, and that the general was sensitive about it he feels assured, because the general spoke to him of it frequently.

Speaking of his wounds reminds X. that in the whole

time he knew Upton he never once heard him allude to them, and only once or twice did he ever mention his service in the field. Once X. asked him about his celebrated charge at Spottsylvania on the 10th of May, when with twelve picked regiments he pierced the rebel centre and captured the guns in his front. Said Upton, "Well, that day I called up the officers and told them that from the moment we started I wanted to hear not a word from any one of them except 'forward! forward!'" but Upton never could be got to say what he thought of Mott's failure to support him.

We had frequent visitors that summer; lots of men of our service came up, and occasionally they were officers of about Upton's time as cadet. One incident, as illustrative of his modesty or indifference, X. will never forget. The commandant's tent was a great place for fighting battles o'er again, though he himself rarely, if ever, could be induced to speak of his own. One day six or eight of us were gathered there, and the floor was held by one of those blatant gentlemen who, having graduated before the war (and in this instance before Upton), and having had just as good a chance as the gallant band of ambitious young lieutenants who rose to be generals, had preferred the safety, ease, and slow promotion of mustering and disbursing duty, and whose only brevet was for the farcical service of the "recruitment of the armies of the United States."

For some reason or other gentlemen of this stamp always found it necessary to talk more loudly about the war and to be more savagely critical in their remarks than the fellows who had been all through it, and also there was a strong tendency on their part to disparage

the services of the successful men, and attribute the promotion over their heads of such soldiers as Mackenzie, Upton, Merritt, Custer, Webb, and the like to political influence. So Major —— was holding forth this day about luck in the line, and the rest of us were sitting around listening rather disgustedly, when he startled us with this:

"Well, now, Upton's another instance. Of course, I don't mean to say but what *you* fought all right when you got a chance, Upton, but you won't deny that there were fellows who went through the whole war with the regulars, stuck to their regiments or batteries, got wounded time and again, and only got a brevet; but here you are a lieutenant-colonel *and never got a scratch!*"

Considering the fact that Upton had been wounded three times in three different engagements, he might have been excused for a pointed reply, but he only smiled quietly, as he sat writing at his desk, and said, "Well, ——, there are lots of men who think just as you do I've no doubt."

Where that colored cadet was concerned Upton did even more than his whole duty. He considered that the integrity of the Academy was involved in the experiment, and was determined to see that the unprepossessing South Carolinian had fair play. All through that long academic year of 1870 and 1871 he was incessantly on the alert, the faintest complaint of the darky led to immediate and thorough investigation, even though previous experiences had established the fact that he was an outrageous liar, and we, the commandant's assistants, were held to a rigid accountability in all matters relating to the gentleman of color during our tours as officer in

charge. One afternoon late in the fall of 1872, in speaking of the matter, the general suddenly exclaimed, "Do you know, X., I'm beginning to believe that the trouble with that darky is that we've made altogether too much of him?" and therein the general had hit the nail upon the head.

And yet there was an occasion on which the gentleman from South Carolina had been roughly handled, and, had it been allowed to leak out at the time, no doubt the magniloquent press of the country would have expanded the affair into the longed-for outrage, but it didn't leak out. Mr. X. believes at this day that when the thing happened only three persons were cognizant of the facts in the case: 1st, the colored cadet himself; 2d, an admirable and most efficient officer then on duty at the Academy; and, 3d, Mr. X. The first named never saw fit to allude to it, probably because he had the deep sagacity to know that here at least he could not, even by implication, charge the assault upon a cadet, and because the facts in the case would hold him up to deserved scorn and derision; and as for the two officers, the first may or may not have mentioned it to other friends besides Mr. X., but not until long after did the latter speak of it to anybody.

It happened in this way. One bitter night in February, 1871, when the thermometer was away below zero, the sudden alarm of the long roll from the guard-house tumbled the battalion of cadets out of their beds and into their ever-ready "reveilles."* Those members of

* A term given by cadets to the old uniforms and loose easy shoes into which they jump just in time for the early morning roll-call.

"B" and "C" companies living on the third and fourth floors found themselves almost suffocated by a thick stifling smoke, and Mr. X., tearing down the iron stairs six at a leap, found the area of barracks a broad sheet of light, and the whole "Dialectic" Hall in the very middle of the barracks a mass of flames. We had the old Philadelphia double-decker out in a few seconds and a stream into the south window, while the Cadet Hook and Ladder Company ran its light scaling-ladders from the roof of the barrack porch to the windows above and brought down the young fellows who could not make their way through the smoke; none too soon either, for in three minutes the flames were raging along right and left through the fourth story, and eating their way with incredible fury and rapidity over the entire length of the barracks. That was a dismal night. Dozens of the corps had escaped with only the clothing they could seize at the moment: all were soon coated with ice. Every man had his appropriate duties to perform, either on the brakes of the hand-engines, manning the hose lines of the steamers, or the ladders, or bucket lines; few had gloves, many only their shell-jackets, but all along until broad daylight those plucky boys toiled unflinchingly; wet, frozen, scorched, smoke-blinded by turns, every man was at his post, and the chief engineer of the department as then organized at West Point smiled grimly, as he stood with Upton directing the streams in the glare of the flames at the angle, when the general said, "Who wouldn't be proud of the corps of cadets if he could see them to-night?"

And yet there was a shirk. With the exception of certain picked men who belonged to the "crack" hose

company, then commanded by Cadet Captain Wetmore, and including among its pipe-men such adventurous spirits as "Tony" Rucker, Davenport, and Birney, all the "A" company cadets belonged to the hand-engine, and had worked manfully at the brakes until the freezing of the valves had rendered their machine useless, when their first sergeant called them off, and their officers formed them into bucket lines up the halls of barracks. Then it was that the word began to be passed, "Where's the nigger?" No other cadet was missing,—he was known to be safe, for he lived on the ground-floor, and early in the fight had been seen completely equipped in overcoat, arctics, gloves, and even ear-mufflers, a marked contrast to the majority of his white comrades, who, having turned out in the first things they could lay their hands on, seemed to scorn any addition until they had that fire under control. It was about two o'clock when the alarm sounded, and from that time until somewhere about five not a soul had seen him. The chief engineer, moving from point to point, noting the work of his men and "verifying their presence," called upon the soldierly cadet captain of Company "A" for his report. "Every man present, sir, and at his post except the n—except Mr. Smith," was the reply, and then it seems that the chief muttered something uncomplimentary to the African, and went off about his business. But another officer hearing of the matter, and being a fellow who could stand no nonsense, bethought himself of the fact that not fifty yards away lay the gymnasium, cozily warmed by steam and softly saw-dusted as to its floor. He said nothing, but repaired thither at once; the door was closed but unlocked; he opened it and quietly entered. All was

dark and still save where a faint hissing in a far corner indicated the location of the steam-coil, and to that corner he groped his way, stumbled over something curled up close to the heater, bent down and lifted that something gently but firmly by the ear, calmly escorted that something (by the same means) to the door, and then with one vigorous kick *vis a tergo* sent the colored cadet flying out into the area of barracks, and for once, anyhow, justice was done the pioneer of his race at the military academy of the nation.

In the light of the intense satisfaction he derived from hearing of this incident the Radical Republican, Mr. X., forgot that there were such things as tribulations for officers at West Point. He may not have related the outrage just as it occurred, but as he remembers it after this lapse of years, and with its recital gladly brings this paper to a close.

THE TELEPHONE AS AN ADJUNCT TO THE NATIONAL GUARD.

THE riot alarm struck just at 8.45 as Mr. X. was trudging his way down to the armory. Late as midnight there had been a conference. The mayor, the sheriff, the governor of the State, the general manager of the biggest railway of the Northwest, the adjutant-general of the State,—one of the finest soldiers it has ever been Mr. X.'s lot to be associated with, and of whom he wrote in a previous paper,—and finally Mr. X. himself. The governor knew and had reason to know that the civil authorities could not control the situation. The mayor and the sheriff—both Germans—thought that they might control the mob by some native eloquence of their own. *We*—the governor, the adjutant-general, and Mr. X., now a colonel and aide-de-camp on the staff of the governor—had convictions to the contrary. We *knew* the civil authorities could *not* control the mob, and that nothing short of the sharp arm of the National Guard would put an end to the lawlessness and riot.

The mob—mostly Germans and Polanders—had swept through the valley of the Menomonee, cleaning out the railway shops, driving workmen from their benches, threatening death to any man who dared to work after their demand, "*acht stunde*" (eight hours), had been acted upon by the employers—unless in their interest. The

great Allis works—the finest in the West—were closed because the mob threatened the workmen, and the civil authorities were powerless to protect them, and the mammoth rolling-mills far down towards the South Point were to be the next object of attack.

Out in the Menomonee Valley worse things prevailed. There lay the great shops of the Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company, every man driven from his bench, the round-house, the machine-shops, the repair-shops, with a thousand plucky employés; yet, having no organization, no leader, no arms, they had been driven from their places by a mob of frenzied Polanders and "low Germans," and the municipal authorities, with a reserve of fifty police, and the county magnates, with the sheriff and his *posse comitatus*, and the Teutonic eloquence of the two combined could effect nothing. Neither one would risk his political chances by declaring war against the vagabonds that had already despoiled the city's fair name. Neither dared to call in certain aid against the German name; both knew that, while at the outset the strike was begun by honest but misguided workmen, in less than twenty-four hours the strikers were re-enforced by all the thugs, thieves, and blackguards that could be found in a population of two hundred thousand,—mostly foreigners,—and, above all, that they were now being hourly incited by the furious speeches of avowed Anarchist leaders to proceed at once to the enforcement of their demands by the application of the torch and their own peculiar explosive, dynamite. It was known and well known that the Anarchists had been drilling under arms for weeks ahead, and the mayor himself knew, five days before the great parade, under the red flag, of the

2d of May, that every pawnbroker's or second-hand shop in town had been gutted of its arms.

Knowing well the evil elements in the population, strenuous efforts had been made for some time beforehand by our adjutant-general to get the National Guard into shape for business. We had three pretty good regiments in the State and one battalion of infantry of four companies in the metropolis. But a crack troop of cavalry and a light battery manned by an admirably-drilled complement of cannoneers, all dashing young Americans, were our local main-stays. Of course we were balked by demagogue politicians in the Legislature, and the governor himself was for a long time reluctant to believe that there was any necessity for this preparation. He showed the stuff he was made of, however, one night at a convention of the officers of the National Guard, when Mr. X. had inflicted upon them a long lecture on riot duty. No sooner had the lecturer finished than up rose the commander-in-chief. Six feet three in his stockings, with a head and mane and beard like a gray lion, massive and impressive, the biggest man of the hundreds in the senate chamber.

"Gentlemen," he shouted, "I want to say one thing right now. Colonel X. is all right except in just one point,—in his instructions and warnings about the way you receive orders from mayors and marshals and sheriffs. Don't you worry about that! Whenever the time comes for you to tackle a mob in this State, I'll be *thar* as quick as you can, *and you'll get your orders from me.*"

The applause that greeted the chief was deafening; but could we have looked ahead a brace of years and

seen how superbly that stalwart promise was to be redeemed, the dome of the capitol would not have stood the uproar.

However, as the spring of '86 wore on, the adjutant-general at the capital and Mr. X. in the metropolis were in almost daily communication.

The latter was advised to keep constant watch on the situation, and the days were rare when he was not riding through the very large districts occupied by the Polanders and the socialistic Germans, and sending his conclusions to his superior. The detectives willingly told him all they knew, but the chief of police (a German of most kindly and affable character, who had recently stepped into the position with no knowledge whatever of police or detective work and no aptitude for either, but simply because the mayor, a German, wanted a German in that place) deprecated all rumors of threatening meetings among the Germans, and as the governor had, among his political advisers and henchmen at the capital, several Germans (and one of the lowest of low Germans) on his staff, it seemed impossible for the adjutant-general to induce him even to order the ammunition so desperately needed at the metropolis. (We had not three rounds per man of rifle, carbine, or pistol ammunition. As for the battery, they had neither shell nor canister.)

A shrewd politician was the old chief. He did not mean to let any man brand him as an intimidator; but, just at the fag end of April, he concluded to drop in and take a look for himself, and what he saw and heard seemed to bring about instantaneous change. He whisked back to the capital and wired at once to

Rock Island for ball cartridge enough to clean out a *corps d'armée*—provided they hit. Even then, however, he did not mean to show his teeth. Mr. X. got orders to meet the first instalment at the station as the train came in, and there, with some stout drays in readiness, that officer received several innocent-looking dry-goods boxes, variously inscribed "overcoats," "blankets," etc., but the draymen wondered at the marvelous weight. In an hour more the veteran quartermaster-sergeant of the "Light Horse," with the assistance of one man, had knocked those boxes to flinders and lugged their contents down into the vaults of the armory,—and only three men knew that thirty thousand rounds were ready.

On Sunday, May 2, with red flags innumerable, the Anarchists, Socialists, and—sorry day for them that ever they took up with such company—thousands of Knights of Labor, made their big parade. At the fine stone armory of the Light Horse,—which they built themselves, as the State declined to,—in the quarters of the troop and of that gallant Irish company, "The Sheridan Guard," a couple of dozen quiet men in civilian dress looked grimly from the windows, making no reply to occasional demonstrations of hatred and defiance from the procession. No disturbance occurred; no one interfered with the picnic; but the next morning the riot burst forth with the rising sun all over the manufacturing districts, and in twelve hours our fair city was in the hands of a howling mob, with a German mayor, a German sheriff, a German chief of police, whose force was largely made up of Germans, and all of whom owed their positions to the preponderance of German voters, as our sole legal barrier against anarchy and ruin.

At eight o'clock that night Mr. X. was drilling the battery in the use of small arms with which to defend their wooden armory, far up-town and close to the "Polack" settlements (shell and canister still they had none), and at ten he received a dispatch to report at once to the governor, who was hastening in by special train.

It was about midnight that the conference aforementioned was going on. The governor was eager to take hold at once, but could not unless the local authorities begged his aid, and this, after much "palaver," they finally declined to do.

It was about 1 A.M., therefore, that the general manager, whose shops, round-houses, etc., had all been cleaned out, and whose elevators, rolling-stock, etc., were now threatened, called in his division superintendent.

"Then it is understood, gentlemen, that we can have no further protection than you have given us thus far?"

The mayor and sheriff began to explain that they looked for better things on the morrow, but finally admitted that no further force was to be used.

"That ends it, then." And he turned to his assistant: "Give orders to close up everything, Mr. Collins."

"Very good, Mr. Miller."

And so the conference ended.

All the same, we had our orders for the morrow. And sure enough, about 8 o'clock A.M. the civic authorities threw up the sponge and fled to the governor for aid, and at 8.45 all over the city the fire-bells were clanging, as aforesaid, the stirring riot alarm. X. made a quick run for the armory and was getting into uniform in the officers' room, while the troop was rapidly assembling in the riding-hall and the Sheridans were darting up the

stairs to their quarters on the second floor. Then the telephone in the office began its "R-r-r-r-r-r-ring," and just then in came the chief and the adjutant-general. The first news was that the "Polacks" were threatening the battery armory. The guns were in danger, and between listening at the 'phone with one ear and to arriving officers with the other, the governor's first order was to have those guns run down here as quick as possible. Mr. X. was put in command of the troop, battery, and the infantry at the Central station. In forty minutes every command in town was reported by wire as ready for duty at its armory.

An orderly sent to the battery armory came back on the run to say they couldn't move their guns because they had no horses, and Mr. X. was in saddle in short order and trotting northward with a few troopers to "stir them up." It was a quick case of "man the pole, splinter bar, and wheels." Then the guns were in the street and rolling leisurely down-town, a small guard was left with carbines and abundant ammunition, and, with cannoneers somewhat blown and vastly astonished, those guns were soon parked in the big riding-hall. Meantime, the Fourth Battalion, under its German major, had rapidly assembled and been whirled off by special train to "Bay View," where a great mob was already gathering about the rolling-mills; a knot of excited citizens were clattering around the governor; an expert "telephonist" was at the instrument rapidly transmitting messages to and from the chief or adjutant-general. Every company of the First Infantry, as far out as Darlington on the line of the Southern branch of the railway, fully one hundred and fifty miles, had reported ready and only waiting for

the cars; some were already *en route.* We knew that by 3.30 we would be re-enforced by at least four companies, with others coming close on their heels; but meantime said the excited citizens, what was to become of the Allis works, the stove-works, the great flour-mills, the magnificent elevators, and, above all, the *breweries?* Mobs were gathering around each and every one, so declared each new arrival, and X. and his cavalry were kept on the jump whisking around town and exploding these *canards.* There wasn't a mob at any one of these points that a platoon couldn't have larruped. But at one of the great German gardens there *was* a throng,—half honest *arbeiter,* half "toughs,"—listening to blood-curdling harangues from their leaders, and these fellows we reconnoitred from time to time, while solid ranks of police stood near the gates.

Down at Bay View the battalion—very badly handled—had been drawn within the gates by a species of march by the flank in single file through a crowd that followed them with imprecations and brickbats and nearly overwhelmed the rearmost company, which was composed, oddly enough, mainly of Polanders, but of a better class. A dozen panicky shots were fired which seemed to set everybody to running, and our expert at the telephone was kept dancing and shouting at the instrument for a full half-hour, when suddenly the thing joined the strikers and refused to work.

"Our line's cut, sir, between here and the Central," was the quick report.

"Run up another, and be lively," said the chief.

Then came the order for Mr. X. and the cavalry to speed forth again, this time to tackle a gang at the rail-

way depot, where they were gathered with the evident idea of making it lively for the in-coming troops. We found them ugly, blasphemous, and obscene, but not dangerous. The first platoon cleared the needed space in ten seconds without firing a shot or delivering a whack with the sabre. The other three formed facing outward, so that we had a big, clear rectangle three hundred yards long, and here in fifteen minutes formed the arriving infantry and a mysterious little four-wheeled wagon. "*Verdamptes mitrailleuse!*" exclaimed one of the scowlers on the sidewalk. We were off for the armory in a moment more, covering the broad streets from curb to curb, but the mob did not follow with so much as a pebble.

Except a brief disagreement between a battalion of the First Infantry and an overwhelming gang that had driven the police "galley west," nothing of consequence occurred in town that afternoon or evening. Fast as the troops arrived they were sent to important points,—one little detachment out to the railway shops; a stronger one, four companies, to the Allis works; others to re-enforce Mr. X. at the Central station, which, said the police, the rioters meant to attack in force and rescue the ringleaders and rioters "run in" during the day.

But the main anxiety was about Bay View as the late hours of the evening came round.

Whatever the German major might think, he had two or three timorous parties on his staff who were perpetually wailing over the telephone that their position was most hazardous; the mob was all around them in heavy force; burning freight-cars, etc. *Couldn't* more troops be sent?

The governor learned by ten at night that furious

meetings had been held in various resorts on the South Side, and that a genuine uprising had taken place among the Poles, who, in response to the rabid harangues of their leaders, resolved to march in full numbers on the following morning, strip the insolent militia of their arms, and drive them into the lake. As a consequence, two *American* companies appeared on the right of the battalion line, making six in all, when the vast mob, waving the flags of anarchy and of some socialistic society over their heads, came thronging into view on the morning of the 4th of May.

Meantime, the governor, over the telephone, had had brief converse with the commander. We were, indeed, "getting our orders from him," and they were brief and explicit,—

"If that mob marches on you in the morning, open fire, sir, and drive 'em back."

It so happened that Mr. X. was in the office the next morning when the worn-out orderly at the telephone suddenly called for the governor.

"Message from Bay View, sir. The mob's advancing."

The chief sprang to the instrument and sung out, "Hullo! Hey? That you, major? What do you say? They're coming, are they? Then give it to 'em! Fire at once!"

And with one volley the back-bone of local anarchy was broken.

There was tremendous uproar and excitement that day in our city. The mobs were everywhere, but the main body was gathered at their big garden on the West Side. Mr. X. had only the troop and two companies of infantry with him when at two o'clock the police telephoned that

they were completely overwhelmed at that point; that they were being fired on and driven, and they wanted "all the help that could be sent them."

"Now, I want this thing stopped for good and all," said the chief. "Here, X., take the Light Horse and what infantry you have and wind it up."

In fifteen minutes we were there. The Light Horse pulled the police out of the hole they were in; the infantry silently and sternly drove back the howling gang until we had all the space we needed and complete command of the position. The mob fell back a block away in every direction. Some stones were thrown, but none reached us. Then we got up the patrol wagons, made sudden dashes into the mob, gathered in man after man until we had the carts crammed three deep with cowed or cursing "toughs," but never a move was made to rescue them. Never another stone was thrown. Every time a platoon of horse started up either street, away would go the crowd full tilt; the big garden had not an occupant, and we had not had to pull trigger once. Finally the little command rode back through streets crammed with rioters an hour before and brought its cart-loads of "toughs" to the police station. That night in Chicago was the tragedy of the dynamite bomb in Haymarket with the slaughter of so many brave men, but when we got back from the garden we had the local leaders and the orators behind the bars, and our mob had played its last card.

All the same, the guard had to be kept up. The governor left for his hotel; the adjutant-general was suddenly called to the capitol, and Mr. X. was left supreme at head-quarters, and was ass enough to tell the worn-out

telephonist he might go until morning. Not until this eventful night did he learn the real character of the telephone as an adjunct to military operations. He had had no sleep for thirty-six hours, and meant to get it now. Guards, sentries, pickets, and patrols were all provided for. The captain of the Light Horse moved in with him, and on a couple of cots they stretched themselves, boots, spurs, and all. Then it began,—

R-r-r-r-r-ring!

Up jumps Mr. X. and seizes the "ear trumpet."

"Hello!"

"Oh—all right. That's you, X. How're you all getting on?" comes back in the sonorous voice of the governor.

"All serene. Every man asleep except the guard."

"Well. A report has just come to me that Caldwell's command out at the car-shops——"

Plkt. Whr-r-r-r-r-r!

And the governor's firm tones are suddenly replaced by a shrill, distant, high-pitched feminine communication,—

"An' I just told her that I wouldn't stand it from her or any other——"

Mr. X. grasps the crank with indignant hand:

R-r-r-r-ring!

A voice, sweet and placid—feminine of course—responds,—

"Ye—es? What is it, Armory?"

"I was just receiving a very important message from the governor and was cut off in the midst of it."

"From whom?" still sweetly.

"From the governor."

"Ye—es? What governor?"

"Why, good Gbeg your pardon—the governor of the State, Governor R——. Find him right off."

"Where was he?"

"Don't know. Try the hotel."

"Who shall I say wants him?" sweeter yet.

"Colonel X., at the armory."

"*What* at the armory?"

"No matter!" (vehemently). "Just tell him the armory only got part of his message. I'll stay right here."

Presently the same sweet, placid voice,—

"All right, here's the governor."

Next, explosively, "And if you allow such a thing to occur again you'll never hear the last of it."

Mr. X. (aghast).—"Why, what in blazes has gone wrong, governor?"

"Good Lord! That you, X.? Thought I was still talking with those blankety idiots at the Central. Why, they've cut me off three times to-night in the midst of important matter——"

"Well,—pardon me,—but there's no telling how soon they'll do it again. What were you saying about Caldwell?"

"Great Scott! Didn't you get that? Why, I directed you to——"

"Armory! Armory! Are you through yet?" It's the sweet voice at the Central.

"Through! Not by a—(gulp)—good deal. Give me the governor again."

Three minutes anxious waiting. Then, sweet as before,—

"Armory, are you there? Oh! Well, the governor isn't there any more. He's gone away!"

Mr. X. makes a jump for his sabre, and the stalwart captain of the Light Horse tumbles out of his blanket with the query, "What's wrong?"

"Don't know. You stay here in charge. I've got to find the chief."

A cab whirls Mr. X. over to the hotel, and there he finds the governor, beaming. He is surrounded by prominent citizens congratulating him, and by reporters taking notes. He comes forward at once to greet his staff-officer.

"Did you get my message?"

"No, sir. It seemed impossible."

"Well, it's all right as it turned out. Some railway people hurried in to tell me the mob were firing their cars in the valley and that Caldwell was unable to prevent it, but the manager had his own telephone, and found out that there was nothing in it. The town's full of rumors."

"Then, if there's nothing else, governor, I'll go back to my post."

"All comfortable up there?"

"Well, the men are, but I've a mind to take an ax and demolish that infernal telephone. I apprehend we're to have a lively night with it."

Back to the big armory. In the riding-hall and stables seventy horses, in the troop quarters sixty-five men, and in the battery-rooms as many; in the drill-hall and company-rooms nearly three hundred infantry, all peacefully resting from their labors. In the head-quarters office, the liveliest monologue, interspersed, like the

conversation of old Mexican War Patten, with vivid blasphemy. It is the stalwart leader of the Light Horse who holds the floor—and the telephone.

"Here, take this thing!" he says, as X. enters. "Damned if I don't believe the Central has swapped with the lunatic asylum to-night.—Hey? What did you ask?" And again he addresses the conscienceless instrument. Pause, while Mr. X. throws off his sabre and gauntlets. "No! But you can just tell the manager that if we are cut off again to-night while important messages are coming or going, I'll be hanged if we don't send a guard over there and take possession ourselves. Now give us Bay View again. Here's Colonel X."

"What's wrong at Bay View, captain?" asks X., as he takes his station at the instrument.

"Why, they report firing. I couldn't make out where; and right in the midst of it some d—d newspaper chips in to know if we've got one of their reporters here as a prisoner. I had just time to say I'd find out right off, and if we had we'd hang him, when they were switched off and the commander at the Allis works asked if we had any information of a mob's coming that way and ——"

"Hold on a moment," says X. "What is it, Central?"

"Oh! I beg pardon," the sweet voice again: "I thought this was the armory. Never mind."

"It *is* the armory," yells X., in desperation. "I've just got back."

But the sole reply is a distant "Whr-r-r-r-r-r-r—*Plck!*"

R-r-r-r-r-ring—r-ring—r-r-r-ing-ing, trolls the bell in response to vigorous twirling, and presently—that indomitably sweet voice,—

"Ye—es? That you, Armory? Thought you'd gone."

"Gone? We can't go! Now, for goodness' sake, give me Bay View—quick!"

"Bay View? Why they've been talking the last half-hour, and finally got disgusted because you wouldn't answer. I'll try what I can do."

A few moments' suspense; then, "Yes. Here they are."

"Hello, Bay View! What's the matter?"

"Why, Colonel X., we've been trying to get you the last twenty minutes. This is Major A., of the staff. The outposts and sentries towards town report heavy firing about the Allis works and——"

Plkt! "Armory! Here's somebody who must speak with you at once." (The sweet voice again.)

"Drive ahead," says X., all a-quiver. "It's the Allis works, no doubt, and they're attacked."

A shrill small voice: "Armory! *Armory!* Can't you answer? I've been trying to get you all night."

"Here we are; but for Heaven's sake be quick."

"Well—who is this?"

"Colonel X."

"Colonel who?"

"Colonel X."

"Well, I don't know whether you're the gentleman Mrs. Ferguson wanted to speak with or not. She's got company now down in the parlor. I'll run and see. Just you hold the line a——"

"*Hi!* Central!" shouts X. "Shut off that gabbling idiot and give me the Allis works—quick."

"Shut off *what?*" (sweetly). "Please speak a little lower and stand just a little farther back."

"Oh, never mind. Ring up the Allis works at once."

Presently the Allis works.

"Major, is everything all right. Have you had any trouble?"

"Nothing 'cept half a dozen toughs tried to set fire to the fence. We rounded 'em up before they knew it. Another two tried to disarm one of my sentries. He knocked one of them silly with a 'butt to the front,' and the other's lying here with a——"

"Pardon me, but have you had an attack? any firing—any approach from a mob?"

"No such luck! I wish to goodness they would come."

Then for an hour brisk inquiries and answers to and from the various detached posts, only to find that there had been no firing, no aggressive move. Then midnight, and the post-commander finds himself worn out.

"Central!" he calls.

"Ye—es," sweetly.

"We are about used up now. Please give positive directions that except it be important military business we are not rung up again to-night."

"Very well. I'm tired too, and go home in five minutes; but I'll see you are not disturbed. *Good*-night."

And then Mr. X., played out, with a sigh of mingled weariness and relief, throws himself upon his bunk. The big captain rises, takes his sabre, and says,—

"Hope to goodness you can get a little rest now. I'm going out to look after my guards and outposts. Back in half an hour."

One more message presently routs Mr. X. out again.

A high city official warns head-quarters that immense crowds have attended all the "indignation meetings" held throughout the city, and mean to assault the armory in the morning to release their prisoners. "They have dynamite."

"So have we—lots of it. Good-night."

Finally, drowsiness, oblivion—then, R-r-r-r-r-r-ing . . . r-r-ring! Loud, urgent, imperative. One bound takes Mr. X. to the telephone.

"Hello!"

"Oh, Armory! I'm so glad to get you at last." (The voice is feminine, but pleasant, motherly, benevolent.) "I tried to get you several times this evening, but when I could get the wire you were busy, and when you responded I had visitors whom I could not well leave." (Ah! Mrs. Ferguson herself at last.) "I wanted to inquire about Willy Simpson. His mother and I are old friends, and she telephoned me to say she *had* to leave town, and please to have a motherly eye over him in case of injury or trouble."

"No man of that name in this command has been wounded or injured in any way, madame."

"You're sure of that, are you? I couldn't go to bed without knowing, and my friends have just left me—but, who is this?"

"Colonel X., madame."

"Oh, yes. Well, you know Willy, of course."

"I regret to say I do not—personally. What does he belong to?"

"Indeed, I'm not sure; but its the military—the militia, you know. If Captain S—— were there, perhaps he could tell."

Enter at this instant Captain S—— from his tour of inspection, and X. gladly hands over the case to him.

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Ferguson. This is Captain S——," begins the one-sided colloquy.

"Willy Simpson, did you say? No, I don't know him. And you say you don't know what he belongs to?"

"H'm! Yes. We've got as many as five hundred. There's the Light Horse, the battery, and about six companies of infantry. I don't see how you *could* speak with him to-night."

"Oh, yes! He must be here; but you wouldn't ask me to wake every one of the five hundred up to inquire if he was Willy Simpson?"

"No, madame; I'll do it in the morning, but I cannot now. It is simply impossible."

"Very well, madame, good-night."

"See here, now, Central, that's enough of that sort of thing for one night,—and don't you forget it!"

Then, with a comical grin on his tired face, the captain turns to Mr. X.

"What do you suppose the blessed old lady routed us out at this hour for?"

Mr. X. is at a loss to conjecture.

"She says she *must* write to 'Willy's' mother the first thing in the morning, and she wants to be able to tell her that the pies she sent him were safely received."

R-r-r-r-r-ing!

MILITIA INSPECTIONS.

It was in the spring of 1885 that Mr. X. was notified by the adjutant-general of the State that, in addition to his duties as aide-de-camp, he was named assistant inspector-general, and would be required to make the inspections as prescribed by law that season. We were still a "granger" State. The old militia laws were, many of them, still in existence; but, like the militia, hardly in force. Our legislators were men deeply imbued with the idea that these new organizations, springing up and drilling assiduously, were nothing but revivals of the old "*ante-bellum*" target companies, whose sole object was to parade the streets in swell uniforms, and have an occasional ball or picnic. We had wrestled hard with these Solons, and had striven to make them understand that here in the Badger State we were endeavoring to bring about the *renaissance* so thoroughly accomplished in Pennsylvania and other commonwealths in the East. We wanted to organize the Guard on a business basis; disband the show companies; abolish the old swallow-tailed coats; introduce uniform instruction and discipline; make the command, in short, available for duty. But it was uphill work. Ours is a mixed community, and the representatives of the people were, of course, mixed in equal proportion,—so were their ideas. It seemed impossible to get most of them to understand the situation. "If the boys want to git uniforms and

play soldiers let 'em pay for 'em, that's what I say. The people ain't a-goin' to do it," said the member from Koshtowoc, as he banged the table with his fist and looked triumphantly around upon his colleagues, sure of support and applause.

That patient and diplomatic official, our adjutant-general, explained, however, that the riots of '77 had taught Pennsylvania the need of a disciplined State force. Ohio had learned the bitter results of neglect in the destruction of Cincinnati's court-house and records, with lamentable bloodshed as an accompaniment. Chicago had twice been at the mercy of her thugs and blackguards, and had to call for regulars to help her out of the mire. We did not want that said of our metropolis.

But the satirical Solon was not to be alarmed by "modern instances." "I don't fear anything of that kind here," he said. "The good sense of the people will stand between us and harm. *We* have no rioters and thugs." (Sixteen months afterwards our metropolis was in the hands of a mob of anarchists, socialists, etc., and the civil authorities begging for troops.) "If there's any trouble here we'll just call out the old Grand Army of the Republic boys. They'll settle it." And in so saying the orator from Koshtowoc winked at his associates on the committee and nodded to the note-taking reporter. That remark was warranted to "make him solid with the boys" in his district. And so our committee fell back with distinct sense of defeat.

All the same, the adjutant-general was not the man to give up. It was a holy cause; and if we couldn't get what we ought to have, we would do the best with the means at hand.

At this time the authorized force of the State consisted of thirty-four companies of infantry, a troop of cavalry, and a battery of light artillery. The support allowed them was three hundred dollars a year, each, for armory rent, and five dollars per man for uniforms. Three regiments were formed of ten companies each, and in our city one battalion of four companies. The law required each company to be inspected once a year between the 1st of May and the 1st of November, at its own station and in its own armory; and, with admirable economic spirit, provided that the officer making the inspection should receive no pay whatever, but might be reimbursed by mileage for the necessary traveling expenses.

Deeply interested as he had been in the troops of his State in the days when he was big enough to be made marker of the First Regiment, long before the war, Mr. X. had read the newspaper accounts of these annual inspections with unflagging zeal, and had high expectations accordingly.

It had been the custom for some years for different staff-officers to inspect the commands nearest their homes, and as many or most of these gentry were selected because of some political "pull," and rarely because of any knowledge or experience in the military art, it is perhaps easy to account for the similarity between the journalistic accounts of these ordeals. One will suffice for the lot. We quote from the *Daily Reporter:*

"MILITARY INSPECTION AND DRILL.

"Last night the Guards were formally inspected and reviewed by General Blank, of the governor's staff. The company under Captain ——

made a splendid appearance as it filed into the drill-room, and, as each man answered 'here,' and brought his musket down with a bang when the orderly called his name, every spectator felt a thrill of pride at their martial bearing.

"After the drill, which was executed with the precision of veterans, the silent manual and the drum-tap movements being especially fine, the general addressed the boys, highly complimenting them upon their discipline and efficiency, and congratulating the citizens of our thriving town upon having so admirable a band of defenders. Captain —— made an appropriate reply, and Orderly —— called for three cheers for the general, which were given with a will. Then, headed by Zimmerman's band, the Guards marched to Tony Schlaeger's, where speeches, songs, and foaming lager wound up an enjoyable evening.

"Confidentially, the general told our reporter that he had never seen anywhere such precision in drill, and that the —— Guards could not be excelled even by the famous Seventh Regiment of New York City."

When the general inspected the Rifles at Washabaw the following evening, he appears to have been similarly impressed by the sight of that fine command, so said the *Washabaw Journal.* And so in like manner were the various staff-officers, until the spring of '82, when we got a war-horse for a governor and an energetic soldier for adjutant-general.

Barring a possible, and most natural, leaning to the Grand Army of the Republic, and an unflinching faith that, with a squad of his old boys, armed with the old gas-pipe of a muzzle-loader, he could clean out a whole company of these new-fangled things, the Executive did pretty well by his troops, and the adjutant-general did all the inspecting that year and for a year or so later, he being by law adjutant- and inspector-general of the State. Then, having paved the way, he called in Mr. X., and that officer began to work on the lines indicated, and for the first time had an opportunity of visiting at their

quarters the Guards and Rifles and other commands of whose efficiency the local press had spoken in such glowing terms.

There was a time, years before the war, when, with broad white crossed belts, glittering breastplate, and low-hung cartridge-box and bayonet scabbards, with high bear-skin shakos, and the slow, stately movement of Scott's tactics, the old swallow-tailed coat looked well; but to see a swallow-tailed coat with loose trousers, no cross-belts, no tall shakos, nothing but a waist-belt and a forage-cap, the thing seemed incongruous in the last degree; but that was the way Mr. X. found many of the companies of the State when he made his rounds in 1885.

As luck would have it, one of the first companies visited was the "Veteran Rifles," which had been pronounced by General Blank, three years before, the equals of the New York Seventh, and, quite possibly, had so considered themselves ever since.

The captain met the new inspector with a fine flourish at the door of the armory, and informed him that the boys were ready whenever he chose to appear. The inspector told the captain that he would like him to dismiss his company, and then let him see the first sergeant form it and call the roll. Ranks being broken, the first sergeant gave the command, "Fall in, Veteran Rifles!" and the men took their places in rank, not without considérable pushing and an infinite amount of looking about, laughing, and talking. The file-closers made no attempt to check this performance, the lieutenants fell in with the file-closers, and the captain stood with folded arms where he could look on, but in no way did he interfere with the work of the omnipotent "orderly."

That official stepped down the line, and not being satisfied with the positions of some of the men, took them severally by the sleeves of their coats, dragged them out of the column of files, towed them to some other point, and squeezed them in. Finally, having the men placed in accordance with his ideas, the first sergeant gave the command, "Left face; support arms. Attention to roll-call." And the first name called was that of Captain ——, next Lieutenant Brown, then Lieutenant Jones, and each of these commissioned officers obediently and promptly answered "here" at the beck of the first sergeant.

When the captain was requested to give his authority afterwards for this somewhat unusual method, he replied that they had always done it, and that nobody had ever found fault with it, and it was considered the proper thing.

After the inspection, which went off without any further remarks on the part of the inspecting officer, who preferred to see how things would go without any interference, the captain gave the command, "Rest;" and Mr. X. proceeded to jot down in his note-book the number of men not properly shaved, boots not blacked, dirty or torn gloves, coats not buttoned, fancy neck-ties, jeweled scarf-pins, and other unorthodox points which had attracted his attention.

A reporter stepped up and blandly inquired what he thought of the boys, and the inspector informed the reporter that he could tell more about it when he got through with them.

During the inspection several men, chewing tobacco, were expectorating freely over the floor, and exchanging

remarks with their comrades in the line as to the appearance of certain of the spectators and the somewhat unusual movements of the new colonel.

The captain was then directed to put his company through the manual of arms, part of which was very prettily done. The firings were unique, especially the loadings. Firing by company was certainly a simultaneous performance. Then the captain "ordered arms," and gave his men another rest.

"You have only given the firing by company, captain," said the inspector. "Let me see them fire by file."

"Well, colonel, that's something we've never practiced," said the captain. "There's nothing soldierly in that; there's no snap or unanimity in it, and it only demoralizes the boys to give them things that they don't do exactly together."

"Never mind, captain; give the commands for firing by file, and let's see what they will do."

But the captain didn't know how to give a command for firing by file, neither could he give the commands for the oblique firings, nor for firing kneeling, and, fortunately for him, firing lying down was not demanded.

The movements of the company in columns of fours and platoons were next required, and here it was found that the captain, though possessing a fine and ringing voice, was utterly independent of the tactics as to his commands. They were a mixture of Scott, Casey, and Knight Templar or broom-brigade tactics, Mr. X. couldn't tell which, and finally he stopped the captain and told him that that was very pretty so far as it went, but that he would like to see some movements that would test the knowledge of the company.

So long as the company was permitted to "gang its ain gait" and put up an exhibition or "go-as-you-please" drill, the movements were certainly so smoothly done that the array of spectators applauded vigorously, and Captain —— looked flushed with success despite the shortcomings in the firings. Presently the company executed on right into line from column of fours in very pretty style. Each set as it halted making a soul-stirring stamp that reminded Mr. X. of the hussar "orderly" who delivered all the messages in "La Grande Duchesse de Gerolstein." Then, with a simultaneous bang, arms were brought to the order. The room shook with applause, and the captain, mopping the perspiration from his brow, triumphantly accosted the inspector with, "How's that?"

Mr. X. thought it was all very pretty, but ventured to inquire where the stamp was found in the pages of Upton. The captain did not know, but considered it an improvement on the tactics. "You don't object to our doing anything better than the book, do you?" he asked.

"No," said Mr. X. "But unluckily the President seems to have a prejudice against it, and the Secretary of War—two of them, in fact—prohibits any exercise or evolution not embraced in the tactics."

"Well," answered the captain, "we haven't introduced any 'exercise or evolution' in that stamp. It's pretty, and it pleases the boys and catches the crowd, like the twelve counts in load. It makes 'em take more pains with their drill."

"All the same," responded Mr. X., "it should not be done, simply because it isn't in the tactics."

"Well—but look here, colonel," responds the crack

drill-master of Pecatonica County. "I don't question your authority in the least, and that stamp shall be stopped, but, if you are going to prohibit our doing anything on drill that is not affirmatively prescribed in the tactics, how the mischief am I to get the men's heads up again after rest on arms? Paragraph 91 don't provide for it, and if we carry out that iron-clad rule we'd have the whole company hanging their heads like so many naughty boys, after they had come to the carry. How can I get my lieutenants in front of their platoons when I'm moving in double time, company front, and want to break——"

The inspector fairly chuckles: "Captain ——, I'm delighted to see you are so close a student of the tactics. Don't ask me to supply their shortcomings, but stick as close to the text as you can without being guilty of manifest absurdities. Now, by the way, I notice that all your movements have been by the right flank. It has been fours right, right by platoons, on right into line, right forward, fours right, etc. Now let me see some movements the other way."

"Well, now, colonel, we never do that," said the captain, with a laugh. "You see it kind o' breaks the boys all up. You can 'get there' just as quick by the right flank, and then they always know just what to expect, and do it in handsome style."

"Well, *can* you 'get there' just as quick? Suppose I tell you to place your company ten yards to the left and rear of its present position, and facing in the same direction, how would you do it in the quickest way?"

"Face it to the left. Then by the left flank, march, halt, and about face," answered the captain, triumphantly.

"Well, that would certainly be one way of doing it; but I meant that you should utilize the sets of fours. The tactics do not contemplate marching any distance in a column of files. Men are almost sure to lose distance."

"Mine don't! They can march a mile lock-stepped like so many convicts. Here! I'll show you." And the captain whipped out his sword and was about to call his company to attention, but the inspector told him ocular demonstration would be unnecessary on that point.

"Just execute these movements, captain;" and Mr. X. jotted down on a card, "Fours left; then *left* front into line. Fours right about; then left forward, fours left. On left into line. Left by platoons; then form company to the front."

The captain shook his head as he looked at the card. "I'll try it, if you say so," he said; "but the boys will think it's mighty queer."

Evidently they did, for in two minutes the Rifles were tangled up in a hard knot and confusion was worse confounded. A little later, when the company was straightened out and marching gallantly in column of fours "right in front," the inexorable inspector told the captain to form line to the right front. Obediently that officer shouted, "Right front into line!" but, true to their years of practice, the men obliqued to the left and came up on the wrong flank.

"Try it again, sir," was the order; and this time, though with much hesitation and some disorder, the line was formed.

Up comes a prominent citizen, an old soldier, a gallant war veteran who proudly wears his G.A.R. badge, and is

a local authority on all matters military. He has been loudly condemning the captain's astonishing "break" to a knot of crestfallen friends of that officer, and the reporter of the local paper is jotting down his words. A young gentleman in the neat uniform of the State University battalion ventures to put in a word in the captain's defense. "It is perfectly right according to tactics," he says, "to form line to front either by right or left oblique."

"Bah! I never heard of such a thing! Any old soldier will tell you that when the right is in front you must come up on the left, and when left is in front you come up on the right. Here! I'll prove it by the colonel," he says; and a rest having been ordered in the mean time, the old major comes up to prove his point, and the crowd follows.

"I've just been telling these gentlemen the captain made a big mistake in several of those orders. It was his fault that there was confusion. The company tried to do it right."

"No, major; the captain's orders were according to the present tactics——"

"But I learned my drill over twenty-five years ago. I was in the *regular* army before I went in the volunteers, and I *know* it's wrong."

Mr. X. has no time to explain that he, too, learned the drill twenty-five years ago, and was in the regular army. The veteran shouts his views for the benefit of his fellow-citizens and then bursts indignantly through the crowd and makes his way out of the building. It is his conviction, and doubtless that of the populace, that the inspector is an ignoramus who knows nothing whatever of the tactics. Indeed, the reporter is all prepared to "show

him up" in the local paper, but, luckily for the reputation of that unfortunate officer, the editor himself is a looker-on, and it occurs to him to make some inquiries and to "search the scriptures military."

There is no parade to the music of Zimmerman's band, no speech-making at Schlaeger's, no cheering the inspector. He leaves town to go to the next station, leaving behind him a community impressed with the idea that he has put their pet company in a very wrong light, and knows nothing whatever of his business.

But next year the Rifles drill just as well by the left as by the right flank. The men have found out there are two ends to the company and that there is a heap more to the tactics than was supposed. The inspector is received without enthusiasm, of course, for the populace maintains that he has just ruined the drill of that company. "They used to come to every motion of the load exactly together. They could fix and unfix bayonets just click, click, click—like that. It was ten times better then than it is now, and they would stand no chance whatever in a competitive drill."

Distinctly, then, in standing up for the abolition of all the old militia ways, Mr. X. was undergoing the trials of the reformer as well as one of those of the staff-officer. Pretty much every company had some especial "fad" which it had long cherished and was bound to protect at all hazards. Most of them had a beautiful flag,—presented by the ladies, or voted at a fair, or won at a competitive drill,—and they wanted to parade this flag at inspection, color-guard and all, and could not cheerfully acquiesce in the ruling that only on battalion formation could colors be allowed, and then only one. Another

company turned out in white cravats, the bows tied outside the dress-coat, and swore they had "regular army authority for it." O ye regulars! How was it, what hapless inspiration possessed ye, that no less than eight officers of a gallant regiment should have had their cabinet-sized photos taken—each man in full uniform—with a white cravat tied outside the coat? Mr. X. recognized the pictures, but refused to recognize the authority. The officers of another company appeared in mounted officers' helmet cords, and said the by-laws of the company authorized it; others wore buff gauntlets on foot duty. A favorite manœuvre of some organizations was to open files in column of fours and then at the command "Knapsack rest!" carry the rifle horizontally at the back of the neck, both hands holding it in that position. Of course there were a dozen accurately and admirably drilled companies, but it was uphill work to try and eradicate all these and a thousand other "milish" peculiarities from the others. The adjutant-general was backing the inspector just as far as he could, however, and knew far better than did Mr. X. the difficulties in the way. Whenever the latter had occasion to "score" an organization pretty heavily, its friends, especially if it happened to be commanded by German officers, would immediately rush to the governor and complain and even threaten. "The boys won't stand it," they said, and it was intimated pretty plainly that if the staff-officer was allowed to find fault with the "Germanias" or the "Bismarck Guards" or the "Prinz Karl Rifles" the old governor need look for no "votes" from their districts if he came up for re-election, and that astute feeler of the public pulse was not a little discomposed.

Once, after an exhibition of almost total ignorance of the tactics on part of the captain and lieutenants of one of these commands, the inspector was cautioned by a civil official to "be very careful what he said about that company. *They are all but three of them* ——," and the official gave the name of the political party then in power. Mr. X. said he could not see what that had to do with the question of their efficiency or non-efficiency as State troops, and the gentleman replied that while it should have nothing to do with the question, it *did* have a great deal.

Another officer, found to be grievously ignorant of the tactics, excused himself, because his men "were workingmen and couldn't get around." Mr. X. pointed out that the best-instructed company in the district, if not in the State, was made up entirely of workingmen, and that in any event that was no excuse for the captain's ignorance of his own duties;" but the reply was too much for the inspector.

"Well, you see it's this way, colonel: I'm so worried all the time lest they should go wrong that I can't think of my own commands."

Then what a time we had when getting rid of the tail coat! What a "kick" there was when first it was announced that new companies must adopt the uniform of the regular service and nothing else, and old companies would be required to provide themselves therewith as soon as their original dress should be worn out! Yet when those neat, soldierly, dark-blue tunics with the white pipings and facings appeared on guard and parade in camp, the prejudice disappeared. Three and four years ago the cry was that "they were trying to make us

like regulars." Two years ago they themselves were beginning to try to look like regulars, and could not fast enough learn to carry themselves as befitted their new dress. And finally, last year, in his report to the Secretary of War, based on the observations of a most accomplished regular sent to observe the work of each regiment in camp, the adjutant-general of the army was able to incorporate these words: "I believe that the Wisconsin National Guard will compare favorably with any State troops in the country. The *personnel* of the troops is excellent. The officers composing the staff of the governor——" But spare our blushes. "Most of the regimental field-officers also saw service in our late war. The company officers are mostly young men,—zealous, active, and efficient."

Last year when General Sherman rode along the line of neatly-clad infantry, cavalry, and artillery, all in dark-blue service dress, with only white helmets and white gloves to break the sombre effect of the utter lack of plume or tinsel, and saw among their officers men who had followed him to Atlanta and the sea, he said they looked for all the world "like business," and that has been our end and aim for years past.

MILITIA CAMPS OF INSTRUCTION.

We turn now from the inspections required of each individual company by the State laws, and come to their performance under canvas when assembled by battalion. It was a long time before we could extract from our legislators a sum for the purchase of sufficient tentage for the encampment of a ten-company regiment; and that it was finally obtained for the purposes of the National Guard was an achievement made possible only, it would seem, by the agreement that the tents should at all other times be at the service of the omnipotent Grand Army of the Republic. The reasons for this assertion will appear later on. Camp equipage at last having been obtained,—wall tents of excellent size and quality for line officers and men, hospital tents for the field and staff, —the next thing was to decide the matter of camp-grounds. By this time the infantry had been organized into three ten-company regiments and one battalion, the regimental districts being mapped out with a view to rapid mobilization,—the First Regiment along the southern border of the State, the Second along the eastern upper half, the Third the western upper half, and the Fourth, a four-company battalion, being stationed in the metropolis.

It was decided by the powers that were that, for the time being, regiments should encamp within their districts and on such tracts as could be found in the neigh-

borhood of the large towns or cities. The first year's encampments were largely experimental, for Mr X.'s share in them was confined to the practical instruction of the cavalry troop, an unusually good one. But the camps resulted in the retirement of one or two war veterans who, it was only too evident, looked upon the whole matter as a huge joke. The year following, at the invitation of the adjutant-general, Mr. X. accompanied him on his rounds of the different camps for the purpose of conveying such practical instruction as was necessary, and before he had been at it an hour, the discovery was made that a big job had been loaded on his shoulders. Officers and non-commissioned officers, as a rule, wanted to know how things should be done, and were quite willing to learn, provided little time for practice was necessary. There were some, to be sure, who came to camp perfect gluttons for work and instruction, —could not get enough of it. Others, and rather a large number, looked upon the thing in the light of a social picnic, and wanted to spend hours in showing their friends about the camp, or in visiting them at their homes in town. And herein was encountered the first lesson.

The regimental officers were allowed to select the place of encampment, as has been said, from among the towns and cities of their own district, and the choice went, as a rule, to the "highest bidder." The State provided tents; but fuel, straw, board-floors, bedding, policing camps, expenses of band, cooks, kitchens, etc., had all to be borne by the regiment. It was represented to the towns-people that the presence of the regiment in camp would draw a big crowd from the surrounding country, and thereby boom the local markets. The

bankers, brewers, "butchers, bakers, and candlestick-makers" were therefore invited to contribute to an encampment fund, as a return for which the regiment agreed to make a street parade on at least one day, and have attractive military exercises going on in the camp at all times. Whatever Mr. X. may have thought of this way of conducting military operations, he had to make the best of it, and work as well as he could with the tools in hand. The first lesson was somewhat memorable. The Third, a fine, large regiment, was in camp; he had witnessed the review and dress-parade, and then, at officers' school, was called upon to point out the errors. The general effect had been very good, but individual errors had been many.

Seated in a semicircle around the colonel's tent were now the officers of the regiment. Within the marquee was the governor with a dozen prominent personages, and fifteen to twenty deep around the officers was a dense crowd of towns-people, rustics, and the rank and file of the regiment, all good-naturedly and cheerily interested in the coming proceedings. The adjutant-general briefly explained what he had called upon Mr. X. to do, and Mr. X., trying not to look aghast, inquired if it was expected that he should proceed to make his criticism of the officers in the face of that great crowd, and was told that there did not seem to be any way of getting rid of them. He next asked the colonel commanding if school couldn't adjourn to the space in rear of his tent, and four or five sentries be sent to keep it clear. "Certainly it can be, if you like; but the crowd will come too, if that is what you are thinking about. Go right ahead, colonel; sail right into them, right here;" and, there being no

help for it, Mr. X. sailed in accordingly. The first thing was to point out to the officers that most of them had their swords on "wrong side before" at this moment, the guard being to the rear instead of to the front, as it should be with the three-ringed scabbard. Next, that very few of them looked towards the reviewing officer in passing; then, that few had executed the first motion of the "present" at the command, and that most of them had saluted with the hand in tierce instead of quarte, as prescribed by the tactics when they lowered their blade. "Take my sword and show them how it should be done," requested the adjutant-general; and Mr. X. illustrated.

Now, many readers have doubtless been to see the great cycloramas of Gettysburg, Mission Ridge, Atlanta, Shiloh, Bull Run, etc., and have listened to the lecturer when he made his explanation of the paintings. Their luck has been better than that of Mr. X. if they have not at least once or twice been compelled to hear sarcastic interruptions on the part of some grizzled veteran with watery eyes, weather-beaten nose, a Grand Army of the Republic badge on his manly breast, and an expression of profound contempt on his countenance. On no less than three occasions has Mr. X. known the lecturer to be compelled to cease his flow of eloquence and request silence on the part of the veteran who was interrupting him with remarks to the effect that "It was the Two Hundred and Twentieth Illinois (or the Five Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania) that took that battery; it wasn't the Two Hundred and Fiftieth New York at all. I know it; I was there; I was the first man in that battery," etc. You have all heard the old saying of the white horse and the red-headed girl. Mr. X. never goes

to one of those lectures now without looking around for the interrupter as soon as the lecturer begins. And so with his own first practical lecture to the officers of the Third Regiment. No sooner had he shown the position of the sword in the salute than up spoke a grizzled veteran in the crowd, "That ain't the way *we* done it, by thunder!" The crowd tittered, and the governor's benevolent features relaxed into a broad smile (out West, where the old-soldier element is far stronger in proportion to population than in the East, it is always the safe thing for the politician to laugh with the Grand Army of the Republic-man). The colonel commanding looked vexed, and undoubtedly he was thinking that this was hardly the proper place in which to conduct an officers' school, but, what was to be done? He arose and said, "The crowd will please keep order; Colonel X. is instructing these gentlemen in the proper handling of their swords, and must not be interrupted."

"Let him do it right, then," says a veteran in the throng; "you can't teach me nothin', by thunder! I am a man of war, I am. I have fought in sixteen pitched battles. I ain't any damn play-soldier, either," etc.

The veteran unquestionably holds the fort. It's the first audience, perhaps, he has had since the day he was mustered out, and he does not propose to lose the occasion. The crowd is with him; so, evidently, is the commander-in-chief. It's no use explaining to the three surrounding counties that the tactics require the backs of the hands to be down instead of up in the salute with the sword; if the tactics say so they are all wrong. The veteran of sixteen pitched battles "knows a damn sight better," as he says, and as he does not hesitate to say.

We got through with the officers' school that morning in rather a fragmentary way, and it was the same thing in teaching practically their various duties in the afternoon, or when sounding the different calls for the drummers. The crowd and the Grand Army of the Republic-man swarmed over the camp and took full possession. There was no use in "kicking against the pricks." Of course Mr. X. could and did suggest to the colonel commanding that the populace ought not to be allowed to roam all over camp at all hours of the day, and that enlisted men should be kept aloof from the officers' schools, but the people didn't think so, and that settled it for the time being.

Before camp was over we had things in better shape. There were hours when the officers could be assembled in the rear of the colonel's tent and drilled practically in all manner of points in which they needed instruction. But during the first two or three years of our State encampments the colonels could not be brought to issue and enforce the orders by which the camp and the parade-grounds should be kept free from incursions on the part of the populace. Of course the Grand Army of the Republic-man was there in force on all occasions, giving the crowd the benefit of his views as to the absurdity of trying to make soldiers nowadays anyhow. "Me and a half a dozen of the old boys could clean out this whole outfit," would be his frequent assertion. Clamoring aloud, too, to the colonel to show them how to "form square" on battalion drill, and when civilly informed by that officer that no such movement was known to modern tactics, loudly proclaiming his contempt for a regiment that didn't know how to form square. "Give me your sword, and I'll show 'em how."

Mr. X. used to ride around and watch all this, and laugh until his sides were sore, but powerless, of course, except by advice, to bring about a better state of things. A year later, when vested with some authority in the premises, he caused orders to be issued that no "outsiders" should be allowed in the body of camp except between parade and tattoo, and that enlisted men should not appear in rear of their company officers' tents except when summoned thither on duty. In this way we had some order in camp, and a certain degree of privacy at the officers' schools, but—at what a cost! One day a pompous old Teuton drove his buggy straight up to the sentry's post and was going on into camp, when the guard seized and held his horse. "County judge," he shouted, but to no avail. The officer of the guard civilly told him that even officers of the regiment could not drive in there; they must go around to a designated point in rear of the field-officer's tent, and offered to escort him thither. But the old man was furious; it seems that he was rarely in his sober senses, and no explanation availed. He owned a newspaper, and to the office thereof he drove in hot haste; and the very next issue of that paper was one continuous lampooning of the colonel commanding and of Mr. X. Of course, there were many in the populace who sympathized with him. Nine-tenths of the men, women, and children saw no reason at all why they should not be strolling around the tents at all hours of the day, or at night either, for that matter; nor was it solely among the "middle and lower classes" that this idea prevailed. Will Mr. X. ever forget one lovely summer morning, when the cavalry were in camp on the shore of our most picturesque lake. The

trumpet had just sounded the first call for reveille. He wanted to see in what shape the men fell in for roll-call, and Mr. X. tumbled out of his blankets, and, fortunately, into boots and breeches before stepping into the front portion of his abode, which was a large double wall-tent overlooking the company's street. Here, to his dismay, were seated two prominent society ladies, under the escort of the pastor of their church. "Ah, Mr. X.," said the imperturbable ecclesiastic, "good-morning; these ladies have seen so much of the pomp and circumstance of glorious war that they were eager to have an idea of a little of the stern reality, and I bantered them into an early visit." Stern reality, indeed! There were the troopers tumbling out of their blankets in all manner of costumes except full dress. Mr. X. himself could only dodge back into his own sanctum for another garment or two, all the while inwardly expressing his views as to the lack of common sense in the church militant. He never could say what he thought of the gentleman himself,—he who piloted that party in search of the stern realities of camp life,—but what didn't he say to the sentry who had let them enter before morning gun-fire? Some of the oddest "breaks" made by our officers, by the way, must be laid at the door of the chaplain. One most excellent divine having announced his intentions of attending camp with the regiment, was assigned to a tent with the field and staff. Fancy the consternation of the colonel and the sensations of Mr. X. when the reverend gentleman marched in with his wife and three daughters, and gravely proceeded to furnish the tent for their occupation. Mr. X. had no authority here; the colonel expressed to every one of the officers—but the

chaplain—his astonishment at the proceeding, yet had not the grit to point out the impropriety thereof to the gentleman himself. The chaplain's family slept in camp the entire week, and doubtless learned a great deal about the art of war which they had never dreamed of previously. Yet the old gentleman was not so much to blame. He had heard what was the actual case, that in some of the regiments the colonels had been accompanied by their wives and family, and doubtless held that the presence of the fair sex would have a restraining influence on the language of the camp, as indeed it would, could everybody but remember at all times that the ladies were right there within hearing. But unluckily most men were too busy and had too many other things to think of to keep that perpetually in mind. How odd it seemed to Mr. X. to note the furnishing of the field-officers' tents in those days,—big bedsteads, bureaus, mirrors, carpets, centre-tables, and "what-nots." But it had to be, so said the officers, so long as we camp around the towns and cities, and so it resulted that, at one of the State conventions five or six years ago, Mr. X. urged the purchase of a tract of land in the centre of the State, at least ten miles from any town, and at last, and only a year ago, we got it.* But before that time came our camps had steadily become more soldierly and our sentries more like the real article. Guard duty is, after all, the hardest thing to teach new troops, and an immense amount of labor and patience is required. Mr. X. thought we had some remarkably well-informed officers by the time the third summer came, and you can

* In 1888.

fancy his amazement when, one morning, a sudden shower came pouring down; the corporal of the guard started out with a rush, and the next thing anybody knew, he had whisked off the entire relief, every blessed sentry on post, and came running into the guard-tents with them at double-quick. Mr. X. went down to those guard-tents in seven-league boots, and the officer of the day received him with a bland smile, and was evidently pleased with the rapidity with which the corporal had performed the feat. He frankly confessed that he had ordered the relief taken off for the fear of spoiling their uniforms, and was rather astonished at the order by which the relief was immediately reposted, and in double time too.

At another camp, and in another regiment, the officer of the day was missing. The colonel was asked if he had given him permission to leave camp. No. Nevertheless the guards were positive that the officer had gone "over to the park," indicating a pleasure resort some little distance away, and there, to be sure, he was found, having a pleasant time with some civilian friends, and professing total ignorance of any military impropriety in the performance.

Once in a while we had some experiences that were purely laughable and that did us all good. Perhaps the best of these was one that occurred at the camp of the Third Regiment, at Chippewa Falls, where we had a fine ground, excellent arrangements, and most agreeable neighbors in the people of this thriving little city. Unluckily it stormed furiously most of the week, and all of the roads and fields were speedily turned into quagmires. Everything had been arranged for a ball, which was to

occur on the last evening of our stay; and as the time drew nigh, the mayor and his committee were fluttering about enveloped in water-proofs and a not unnatural state of excitement. It had been settled that six carriages, all that could be obtained for so perilous a service as the frequent transit from camp to town over such fearful roads, were to leave camp at 8 P.M. with the mayor, the committee, and such officers as were ready, and then be sent back for another load. It was estimated that in three trips all the officers in camp, including the governor's staff, could be thus transported to the hall where the ball was to take place. About sixteen "youngsters" went off with the first round. Then the mayor and committee waited for the array of generals and colonels expected with the next. Nine o'clock came; nine thirty; the ball was waiting, but not another officer appeared, and "His Honor" was rabid with excitement. None of the carriages had returned to the hall; yet an inquiry developed the fact that big loads had been brought in town, and deposited at a neighboring hotel. The mayor darted around there through the pitiless storm, but not an officer was to be found. The billiard-room and the parlors were packed with jovial non-commissioned officers and privates on pass apparently, but not a shoulder-strap was visible. At last, at ten o'clock, some drenched jehus drove up to the hall with panting and bedraggled steeds, and a number of gold-laced officials stepped solemnly forth from the dripping carriages.

"What on earth has kept you all this time?" demanded the mayor.

"I am sure I cannot tell," said one of the generals. "We waited nearly two hours for carriages."

"Great Cæsar's ghost! driver, didn't I tell you to go right back to camp and load up those officers, until you had them all here?"

"Certainly you did, Mr. Mayor, I have been hauling colonels and majors through the mud until this town must be just busting with them. You said I could do it all in three trips. Damn me, if I ain't made a dozen. My poor horses are all tuckered out."

And then at last it all leaked out. The night was dark as pitch. The moment the drivers got back to camp, and before they could get within fifty yards of the head-quarters tents, they were stopped by a host of gentlemen with the capes of their overcoats drawn up over their heads, and (in the Badger State officers and men of the line wore overcoats of the same pattern and finish) a martial voice hailed them with "Here we are, driver; stop just where you are; jump in, major; tumble in, colonel; tumble in——"

"Oh! after you, general; I beg—— After you."

"Not at all, sir; not at all; it is too wet to fool about trifles; jump in; jump in. Load up those other carriages now, fast as you can. Now to the hotel with this crowd as quick as you can get there."

And in this way the jolly sergeants, corporals, and rank and file of the gallant Third had loaded up carriage after carriage as it arrived in camp, while their superiors waited, with such patience as they possessed, among the dismal, dripping, tents of officers' row.

The joke might have gone on until the camp was empty of enlisted men had it not become too big to be kept; and finally the officer of the guard discovered that he had been passing out about one hundred of

the rank and file for carriage-loads of commissioned officers.

As there was only tentage enough for one regiment, it followed that our canvas had to be shipped from point to point about the State, and in this way some loss was bound to occur. All marking, cutting, or defacing of the canvas in any way was of course strictly forbidden, and both at the beginning and end of each regimental camp it was Mr. X.'s custom to make the rounds to inspect tents for the purpose of fixing responsibility in case of damage. At first, of course, in the exuberance of their spirits, "the boys," as they preferred to call themselves, would decorate by means of candle-smoke, or crayons, their camp abode with certain inscriptions, such as "Saints' Rest," "Drummers' Delight," "The Wicked Four," etc.; but one summer seemed to suffice to teach them better. Two years afterwards, just before striking tents at the tap of the drum, as had been taught the men, Mr. X., in company with the colonel and his quartermaster, inspected every tent in camp, and found them all clean, in good condition, with the exception of some old marks which were well known and recognized. What was his surprise, therefore, two weeks afterwards, when making the rounds the first day of the camp of another regiment, to find that a number of the tents had been defaced in a very flagrant way, and a number of inscriptions, far from elegant, appeared all over the canvas. There was only one way of explaining it: When not in use by the National Guard the tents were shipped from one part of the State to another, in order to let the old "Grand Army" boys have their camp-fires, reunions, and post camps,—and the manner in which they were deco-

rated by the veterans was a sight to see. Mr. X. made this circumstance rather a prominent feature in his report of the summer encampments of that year, but that was one portion of his report which never found its way in print. This is why he said earlier in this article that it seemed only on condition the camp equipage should be at the service of the Grand Army of the Republic that it was possible to secure an appropriation for its purchase by the State. Goodness knows they were welcome to it fifty times over, if they would only return it in proper shape.

SHAM BATTLES.

How many readers have had the experience, good or ill, of taking part in furious combat under what Dickens described as a "galling fire of blank cartridges," and helping some State fair, "grand military pageant," or similar catchpenny enterprise, to stagger to its legs, rescued from the "snowing under" it doubtless deserved by the promise of "the whole to conclude with a realistic and magnificent sham battle by the entire assembled force,—regulars, volunteers, and national guard?"

Time was when the regular, from the safe distance of the frontier, could afford to laugh at these affairs and wonder what people could see in them. They were no more like the real thing than brevet to actual rank; but little by little as the centre of population shifted westward with the Star of Empire, and Congressmen sprang from the newly-organized districts and began to have influence —big or little—in shaping the affairs of the nation, and what had been frontier posts were overlapped by the people, and the regular and the State troops began to eye each other askance, there sprang into life a new money-making scheme by which shrewd financiers saw means of depleting the pockets of a whole community and replenishing their own by advertising, in flaming posters all over the Northwest, a vast aggregation of military attractions; reviews, parades, camps of hundreds of the finest organizations in the country; competitive drills of

regiments, battalions, and companies; charges of cavalry; thunderous salvos of artillery, etc. Fine militia companies were tempted to come by promise of big money prizes, and certain battalions, batteries, or troops, of regulars were ordered to go by a department that, properly enough, did not wish to "lose touch with the people."

Goodness knows the regulars, officers and men, were glad enough to go, and do almost anything to make themselves known to fellow-beings and fellow-citizens, whose sole conception of the officers and men of the United States army was derived from a casual reading of the sneers of the Chicago papers and the squibs of other journals no better informed than those of the once-called "Garden City," but who thought it wit or wisdom to follow their lead. And wherever the regulars went, and whatever was to be done, they entered *con amore* into the spirit of the thing, and won among the populace hosts of friends, and from the projectors of the enterprise a world of gratitude. "We'd have been swamped utterly if it hadn't been for you fellows," as Mr. X. heard the business manager say to a group of old frontier comrades time and again, and, indeed, the statement was not exaggerative.

But what comical times we had! What wonderful skirmishes and battles were those we fought among the crested bluffs of Dubuque, along the "Cold Spring" grounds, back of the Cream City, and, last of all, over the barren flats behind that far-spreading, all-absorbing, and fiercely-democratic metropolis of Chicago! In some particulars the experiences were identical in each place. In some places we encountered new and original

views on the part of the public as to the fine points of modern war-waging. In one respect they were all alike: the Grand Army man we had always with us, and in his glory, too. In the "grand-stand," on the outskirts of the crowd, and invariably the most conspicuous personage in his vicinity, the battle-scarred veteran or the hospital "beat," as the case might be, was sure to have a prominent position, and to be taking frequent occasion to inform the crowd that "me and a half-dozen of the old boys, with our Springfields, could clean out a whole regiment of these fellows, with their new-fangled guns."

There was another point in which marked resemblance was at once apparent. With enterprise genuinely American, no sooner was it announced that the sham battle would take place on certain grounds than the populace swarmed forth and took possession thereof, and before the sham fight could come off, as per advertisement, a genuine tussle was sometimes necessary before the lurid spectacle could begin.

Perhaps the liveliest example of this sort of thing occurred at the first encampment of the Wisconsin troops in rear of the city of Milwaukee. There were perhaps fifteen hundred infantry under canvas, a fine troop of cavalry, some guns and gunners from the State capital, and these were all provisionally brigaded together for the time being, and four battalions had been organized from the foot-commands. There had been daily parades, guard-mountings, occasional reviews, and a big demonstration through the streets of the city, headed by the governor and his staff on horseback. The great field was known as the Cold Spring Course, and its entire area was surrounded by a high board fence;

not so high but that ambitious boys could scale it; not so impenetrable but that it could be burrowed under or squeezed through in a thousand places. And after the regular military work was done, a "hippodrome" enterprise had been resolved upon. A new armory was needed for a crack organization; the State couldn't build armories at all or allow money enough even to pay an insurance policy on a poor one; but the soldier-boys had got their heads together and determined on some plans to raise money, and this was one of them. A business manager had been found; blank cartridges by the million had been provided; huge posters had been distributed all over Wisconsin, and fringed a surrounding belt in the other States; prizes were offered for the best drilled companies from anywhere; "regulars" were obtained as judges and staff-officers; and, on the last great day of the feast, a sham fight of colossal proportions was to take place, all of which could be viewed for a very moderate price of admission. The fame of the thing, as has been intimated in a previous article, was trumpeted to the far East, and *Harper's Weekly's* liveliest wielder of chalk and crayon was dispatched to the scene to gather illustrations. The weather had been gorgeous and the crowds generous, so "the management" looked forward with comfort to the proceeds of "battle-day," and probably were not much disappointed when they gazed on the tumultuous sea of people swarming along the race-track and gradually possessing themselves of the entire enclosed space except the tented rectangle at the far western end, where doubled sentries kept the camps tolerably secure against being bodily drifted off.

"Did you ever see such a crowd?" said the manager's

junior partner, an hour before the time announced for the battle to begin. "We must have taken in ten thousand dollars already."

"We haven't taken in ten hundred," said a flushed and excited messenger from the great gate, arriving at the instant. "This crowd has come in from a thousand holes in our three miles of fence, and they keep a-coming."

It was then that the "manager," rueful and wrathful, bestrode his gray steed and whipped his way through a surging host of people, and presently appeared in front of the canvas head-quarters of the commanding general.

"My God, general! I've got to have about a thousand sentries right off. The crowd is busting in that big fence on all sides, and I'll have a tremendous bill to pay and no money to do it with. How quick can I have 'em?"

"Well, Mr. Ferguson, you've got two regiments out now. The sentries all around inside the race-track are trying to keep that space clear for the sham fight, and you have a battalion outside the fence to keep people off the high ground to the south of us. Where are the sentries to come from?"

"If we can't get 'em any other way, I'll have all those on guard around the track. I've got to stop this 'hooking in' right off, anyhow, or we'll have all Milwaukee on this ground in half an hour, and nothing to show for it but damages," said the man of affairs, dolefully.

And so Mr. X., who was adjutant-general of the camp, was bidden to mount his horse and order the immediate changes required by the head of the combined civil and military financial management, and, not relishing the job

in the least, Mr. X. proceeded to carry out his orders. In half an hour the fence was lined with sentries, who speedily drove back every man or boy struggling over, under, or through that barrier, but to do this required nearly the entire force now under arms and awaiting the signal to form for the coming battle. It also necessitated the removal of all but about one hundred sentries from along the race-track fence, whose duty it was to keep the crowd from bulging through and occupying the field. Meantime, the grand stand and spectators' "bleaching-boards" were more leisurely filling, for extra halves and quarters were demanded for accommodations thereon, and the vast space intended for carriages was slowly crowding with vehicles of every description. Mr. X. didn't like the idea of changing those sentries one bit, but "orders are orders," and he had to carry them out.

And now, before going further, a glance at the plan of action and the ground itself may be needed. The space inclosed by the mile race-track was fairly level. The west end was covered by closely-packed tents of the camp, the east end was diversified by a grove of handsome trees, and about one hundred yards back from the judge's tower, just opposite the grand stand, was a dense growth of shrubbery and underbrush, forming a copse which was entirely impenetrable. Between this copse and the stands all was clear and open; behind and beyond the ground was also unencumbered, and from the stands a good view could be obtained. Everything had been lavishly advertised, including a rough sketch-map of the position, and as outlined by the press the plan of battle promised some realistic features and fine spectacular effect.

Fresh from his triumphs at the Dubuque encampment, a gallant soldier of the regular infantry had come in from the frontier to plan the grand attack on the camp of the "W. N. G.," at Cold Spring, and in person to conduct the assault. The defense was intrusted to Mr. X. himself. The last time he and "the major" had sniffed the fumes of battle together was the damp, misty morning of Crook's withdrawal from the Indian villages which he had captured at Slim Buttes the previous day, and to the major in question and to Mr. X. had been assigned the duty of burning every stitch of Indian property that couldn't be carried away. That was blinding, beastly, wretched work, for everything was so drenched with rain it was hard to get fire to take hold. But before they got half through their "sham" duties among their friends and fellow-citizens, this summer afternoon at Cold Spring, both these rival commanders were ready to wish they were back in the smoke, mud, and sharp skirmishing around the Sioux villages.

As set forth in the papers, the attacking force was to appear through a gap in the fence at the east end, and, hidden from view of the camp by the copse and grove to run its artillery up to the right and left; to deploy its infantry in support of the guns, and then to open sudden and furious fire. The alarm and the long roll were to sound at once over on the tented field; the guns of the defenders were to reply with all speed and uproar. Paper shells were to be kept bursting on high and shrieking realistically through the air, and as Mr. X. was to have four guns to the major's one, the latter was to allow himself to be temporarily silenced. Then Mr. X. was to advance the infantry from his left wing across the open

field between camp and the copse in spirited attempt to capture the westward guns of his friend the major, but was to be driven back in confusion by the withering fire from the rifles of the supporting force. A rally, and renewal of the attempt with increased numbers was to result in similar disaster, and Mr. X.'s left wing, finding the enemy in front too strong, was to retire to the general line and resume sharp artillery practice; and the right wing, which up to this time was only menacing the major's gallant left in sufficient force to prevent his sending re-enforcements through the grove to his assailed flank, was now destined to assume the offensive in good earnest.

First a heavy skirmish line was to push out; then a strong line of battle was to sweep down upon the major's guns; two big battalions were to concentrate their fire on one little one, drawn up in full view of the grand stand and stretching from the judge's tower across in front of the copse; this was gradually to crumble and give way before the storm, and then Mr. X.'s whole line was to advance cheering and at the run; the cavalry were to come sweeping down with the general advance, close to the race-track, and then, as the major's left began sifting away, with bugle-blast and stirring war-cry and flashing sabre and rushing steed, the Light-Horse was to charge down past the open-mouthed populace, dash through the guns like Custer's troopers at Winchester, and go hacking and hewing among the dispirited infantry of the foe, who were to throw down their arms and beg for mercy in full view of the ladies in the big pavilion, and the horsemen were thus to be the heroes of the day. Then, with his left crushed and shattered, the major himself

would have no alternative but to come forth and gracefully tender his sword to the triumphant foe. It was most magnanimous in the planner of the plot thus to designate himself to play the part of the vanquished. Perhaps, however, he knew what the result was going to be. It read, like the French army returns in 1870, all very well on paper. Now, let us see how it turned out.

At 3.30 P.M., as advertised, the attacking force was to appear through an eastern gate, and carefully conceal its march upon the distant camp. At 3.45 the head of the column *did* reach the prearranged gap in the fence, but that was as far as it got, for the time being at least. There was no corresponding gap in the dense array of wagons, carts, carriages, omnibuses, etc., wedged all over the circular sweep of track in front. But there was no hurry any more than there was need of bothering about concealing their movements from the encamped foe half a mile to the west. Neither could see the other with glasses of "hextra million power." The entire intervening space—the field of battle itself—was now occupied by the populace, and some thirty thousand friends and fellow-citizens jubilantly roamed or squatted over the plain where by this time the skirmish-lines should be at work, and over whose green sward the 12-pounders should now be belching forth their thunder.

The manager sat in the judge's tower a picture of perturbation. Orderlies, messengers, police, "Pinkertons," and stray guardsmen had been dispatched through the throng. On the one hand were the crowded seats of paying spectators who were clamoring for the show to begin; on the other—on the great field—swarmed the gleeful many,—"*hoi polloi*,"—not one in ten of whom had

paid a dime to get in, and yet they were masters of the situation.

"If you don't clear this field and retire to the race-track the battle can't come off!" roared Mr. Ferguson.

"Den give us our money back!" yelled a gang of gamins in the crowd,—and the crowd cheered delightedly. The manager fumed and raved. Finally he mounted and came cantering into camp, where Mr. X. and the gallant defenders were placidly waiting to be attacked.

"What are we to do, by thunder?" says Mr. Ferguson. "That crowd covers every inch of space you were going to fight over. Can't you get 'em off?"

"Haven't men enough in camp to begin to try. Fast as we shove 'em to one side they'll swarm in on the other. Here—I'll show you," says a field-officer of infantry whose battalion happens to be in readiness. Deploying four companies as skirmishers, he makes a slow wheel southward. The crowd laughs, rolls slowly back until it becomes dense; then refuses to budge. Meantime, the space just vacated is promptly occupied by other enterprising citizens, and after ten minutes' lively skirmish-drill the field is practically full as ever. It dosen't mend matters to tell Mr. Ferguson that if he hadn't taken the sentries away in the first place the crowd wouldn't be here now. He knows that.

But an unexpected ally appears. Black clouds have been gathering. There is vivid flash and thunder clap; then a sudden deluge. The heavens descended in a torrent that in five minutes swept that great inclosure clear of every unfeathered biped and leveled many a tent with the earth. The mob had fled to the State-fair buildings,—the

stables, horse-sheds, stands, benches,—and, even then, thousands were soaked to the skin. Thanks to Jupiter Pluvius, the field was ours. In ten minutes it ceased as suddenly as it began. Then the sentries lined the rail fence at the track, and from camp to copse we held the ground. So, too, had there been a stampede of all open vehicles down at the east end. Thousands of visitors of both sexes were drenched, but there was no use in retreating farther. The sun came out bright and warm. The major and his daring column dragged their guns through the dripping fields. The thunder of the heavens was suddenly answered by the hoarse bellow of the light twelves. The bugles in camp rang out "to arms," and the blue puffs of bursting shells scattered *papier-maché* in powdery fragments upon the upward-gazing faces. No sooner was the major's line established than he was backed up by the populace. Whatsoever might be local prejudice or sympathy, the major was now bound to have the best of it. No concentration of blank-cartridge fire could ever drive him back. All Milwaukee was wedged in behind him; hack and hansom, cab and carriage, men, women, and children; a solid mass of eager humanity, moist, dripping, but determined, now re-enforced his line. It was now all he could do to hold his own against his backers. Under that surging impulse from the rear a headlong charge on camp—a total revolution of the programme—seemed far more probable.

Bang and roar went the big guns; pop and rattle the little ones. The skirmishers danced out to the front; and then, in spite of probable annihilation, refused to go dancing back until their officers dragged them. Stretcher-men, duly detailed, scurried forward to pick up

warriors presumably dead, who became suddenly resurrected and declined to be taken to the rear. All this, however, occurred on the side farthest from the crowded stand and pavilion, and people were only moderately excited, for on the south side of the field, where now were packed the throngs, only a long-range artillery duel and some scattered skirmish fire was going on.

Now came the second stage, and down on the major's fated left bore the heavy battalions of the right wing; and no sooner did the line of battle move to the front than, as at the east end, the crowd came tumbling over the scattered sentries and streaming out upon the field. Mr. X., to his disgust, was re-enforced by a cheering and enthusiastic mob of fellow-citizens, who came chasing after his line, bound—since there was no danger in it—to be in at the death. Detaching his cavalry with orders to scour up and down, over and across the fields in his rear, so that if the foe were compelled, by force of circumstances, to stand their ground, instead of yielding it, as prearranged, he at least might have a line of retreat open, Mr. X. galloped on after his right wing, now hotly engaged, and burning powder at the rate of a barrel a second. Vast clouds of the "villainous saltpetre" rolled on high and obscured the opposite line. Swells, in light wagons, and lovely dames, in carriages, finding it impossible to see through the battle-smoke, came whipping down the course behind the foot-throng and reached a gap where stalwart policemen and guards, with fixed bayonets, had, up to this time, prevented any one from squeezing "between the lines." Through here the captured guns were to be dragged,—when we got them,—but just at this moment all four of them together let go a

thunderous "fire by battery." A dozen teams took fright, became uncontrollable, and, despite guards and police, veered in through this very gap, and the next thing that the triumphant right wing knew, there came, charging through the battle-smoke,—What? The elephants of Hannibal? the war-chariots of Darius? No! Half a dozen snorting, racing teams, bounding carriages, and affrighted occupants suddenly appeared, as suddenly whirled about, and again became swallowed up in smoke; and as nothing on earth could live in front of such a blast of lead in open field, and, as the foe as well as the luckless charioteers would have been blown out of existence by this time, "Cease firing" was sounded, shouted, yelled, and finally enforced. And then, at last, as the smoke cleared away, and people were revealed chasing after stray hats,—chimney-pot and Gainsborough,—and others hanging on to the heads of affrighted horses, and others still picking themselves up and limping out of the way, there stood the opposing line, its last cartridge gone, its position no longer tenable from a military point of view, and no longer "vacatable" from any other. Unable to retreat, the heroic left, with fixed bayonets, grimly faced the coming foe, bent on dying like the Twenty-fourth at Isandlhwana.

Mr. X. sent an aide-de-camp around by the race-track to remind the commander of the inimical left that he was whipped, and really must fall back so that he could be annihilated by our now impatient dragoons, according to programme. Meantime, the two opposing lines glared at each other like pugilists between rounds. The aide came dashing back across the "zone of fire" with the information that the major was deeply sensible of the

fact that he oughtn't to hold his position, but he simply could not fall back. If relief weren't sent him in two minutes he'd have to fall forward in deference to the popular impact,—*vis a tergo*,—in which event, said he, Mr. X. and his bold dragoons had better get out of the way.

"The guard surrenders, but cannot die," says the aide. "Shall I turn the cavalry loose on the crowd?"

"No; they might get lost, and we want them for dress parade. Go and tell Major George, who commands that staggering battalion, that I'll give him one last volley, and they must all drop in their tracks."

"Then the crowd will bust over them and come at us," says the pessimistic aide. "We won't have time even to yell 'Police!'"

"Then we can but die in our tracks. There's no retreat. The crowd behind is as thick as it is in front."

"Can't we slip out between 'em and let the two crowds come together?" suggests the aide.

"Wouldn't do. A sham fight was advertised. They'd sue the management for breach of contract if they got a real one. Give a general *feu de joie*, and then tell every man to yell, 'Both sides whipped.'"

A moment more of crashing musketry, blinding smoke, and deafening cheers. When the clouds rolled by a tumultuous mass of perspiring soldiery was revealed tossing caps and helmets skyward and yelling triumph. Thanks to the populace, the battle of Cold Spring was declared drawn.

Then we tried it for the benefit of another gift enterprise in Chicago; and here, under the pretentious title of "Grand International Military Camp," etc., a big aggregation of bandsmen and militia assembled from all

over the West, and the War Department had been induced to order a light battery, a troop of cavalry, and a battalion of infantry from the regular service thither for duty. Sham battles were promised every afternoon, and some of them were ludicrous in the last degree.

To begin with, the crowd, as in Milwaukee, swarmed over the "Pinkertons" and police before the troops appeared, and when we came forth to do our deeds of daring before the ladies in the grand stands and pavilions, the managers rode vainly to and fro through the populace imploring it to fall back to the seats provided for its accommodation all around the edges of the battle-field; but you might as well reason with a herd of buffalo as with a Chicago crowd. It is never so happy as when in mischief. Where one man out of ten would have enjoyed seeing the military display, nine out of ten thought it bigger fun to bother the "Pinkertons," whom the populace of the Garden City hate as rats do a terrier. Argument, entreaty, and threats of "no game" being alike useless, the police being only a handful in face of such numbers, the commander of the regulars was appealed to, and presently out came the blue skirmish-lines, steadily deploying at "arms port," in face of the throng, and then the masses slowly yielded, retired to the benches and the fences, and, after much bother, having cleared the field and turned the crowds over to the police and the local sentries, the regulars were recalled to take their places for the thrilling combat, and in ten minutes the crowd was out in the field again. Cavalry charges were rendered impossible. The infantry banged away at each other through the intervening mob, and everybody laughed until he or she was tired.

That evening the management insisted that we must have brigade dress parade, as advertised. The "regular" commander said he would not undertake to parade and keep the crowd back too. If the "management" would handle the crowd, he would handle the troops. The management bit its finger-nails and scratched its head, and again appealed to the crowd to fall back,—"You can see just as well at the seats." But the crowd stolidly grinned and stood. Then a troop of regulars rode forth and slowly and civilly as possible for the third time herded the throng back to the fences and the benches; the grand stands and pavilions applauded; the Pinkertons and a line of sentries—not regulars—were placed in possession. A distinguished war veteran rode forth to assume command of the "line of masses," now forming; six battalions of foot, the light battery of the Fourth Artillery, and a swell cavalry battalion made a handsome show as it faced Chicago. For a few minutes the crowd of "unwashed" was held within bounds; but no genuine American, of Irish or other descent, conceives that he can suitably see anything so long as some other American is nearer the object than he, and little by little police, Pinkertons, and sentries were impelled linewards, and when Mr. X., as adjutant-general, galloped out to salute the commanding officer with the present of the entire command, he couldn't find his chief; he was swallowed up in the crowd.

Next day and the next we took matters in our own hands; established sentries before the crowd got there, and managed to have a clear field. Still there were absurd features. One day was to be devoted to a realistic Indian massacre, since Chicago couldn't be satisfied

without painting the camp red and having something genuinely "bluggy." A lot of New Mexican aborigines were there, fellows who were about the color and size of the Apache, and matched him about as a cat does a catamount. A gallant major of Wisconsin infantry, who had won the hearts of the whole "regular" contingent, was to figure as a bearer of dispatches, and was to be summarily dispatched by Apaches ambuscaded in the rocks (bales of hay), and scalped in sight of a shuddering grand stand.

The government policy of sending a company to "punish" a tribe was then to be fully illustrated, and Captain ——, of the Twenty-third, was to show how he and his company used to take the war-path in Arizona, where indeed many of their number had bitten the dust but a decade or so before. These were to be appropriately slaughtered by surrounding hordes (there were about forty-five of the "Lagunas"), who were then to indulge in a wild and ungodly revel and scalp-dance, to be interrupted by a furious charge of cavalry (regulars in full-dress uniform in deference to the wishes of the management), whereat they were to scatter all over the "prairie" and be pursued to their lairs, rallying quickly and in turn overcoming the luckless troopers, and finally the forces of a whole department, like those of Arizona after the squad of Geronimo, were to be launched on the Indians. There would be a surround, a terrific combat, a final surrender, and, with the plain covered with corpses, it was hoped the crowd would go home satisfied. Most of the troops by this time had gone, disgusted. The regulars, being under orders, had to stay and help out the management.

Well, that fight was a stunner, albeit carried out with

startling variations from the advertised programme. Nothing could have been more realistic than the Badger major's headlong tumble from his galloping horse, nothing more dramatic than the scalping act and war-whoops of the Indians; nothing more disciplined than the "die-in-your-tracks" business of the designated victims of the gallant Twenty-third; nothing more blood-curdling than the wild war-dance of the warriors around their prostrate foes.

But there ended the lesson. Intoxicated by the cheers of the crowd, and fired by the taste of imaginary blood, our savage allies concluded to fight out the rest of the thing on their own lines, instead of those of the programme. When the troopers came dashing on the scene from behind the bluffs (a big wooden bullet-stop), the wild warriors faced them like heroes instead of scattering like sheep. Bear-with-a-hole-in-his-tail was knocked endwise by Lieutenant A.'s rushing charger, He-that-shuns-fire-water (a truly remarkable savage) was flattened out by a whack from the back of Lieutenant S.'s glittering sabre, and Wolf-stones-in-his-belly rattled for an hour after the back-somersault he turned when colliding with Sergeant Murphy's steed. But they and their comrades were on their feet in an instant, banging away with blank cartridges at the bewildered troopers, dancing and yelling like all possessed. The cavalry, having no orders to slaughter, fled in some confusion, as the only means of saving their horses' hides from scorching. Then hundreds of infantry, re-enforced by marines and "blue-jackets" from the United States steamer "Michigan," marched forth upon the field,—the gallant ensign in command of the latter bestriding a calico pony captured from the foe,—and this overwhelming force

bore down upon the Apaches and poured sheets of fire upon them, and still they danced and sang, yelped and clattered, and still refused to die. The crowd roared with laughter and delight; the "management" swore a blue streak; the sailors and marines fired away their last cartridge and begged to be allowed to board the enemy. The Wisconsin major, tired of being dead and scalped every three minutes, dragged himself behind a hay-bale to die for the sixth or eighth time, and at last the troops "slowly and sullenly" withdrew, leaving the Apaches masters of the situation. Whereupon, having still some cartridges, and unlimited fight among them, these noble red men turned to and banged away at each other until the manager begged them to clear the field for parade, whereupon again the crowd set up a yell of "Shoot the manager!" and the battle of Washington Park came to an end by that official's unconditional surrender.

Yet, it was a newspaper man who came tearing up to the office to criticise this brilliant spectacular effect. Rodney's battery had been quietly "hitching in" for parade as the affair was being fought out, and slowly marched in on the track beyond the field in time to witness the fag end of the fight. It had no more to do with the "shindig" than a light battery—as such—ever has to do with Indian warfare,* but the representative of the Chicago press thought otherwise.

"It was a swindle," said he; "that battery was within easy range and it never fired a gun."

We haven't had any sham fights since, and if Mr. X. is consulted, we won't have any more.

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* This was written before the Hotchkiss gun had become a prominent feature in frontier battle.

THE ADVANTAGES OF ONE'S OWN WORK-SHOP.

For reasons set forth several years ago in the first of his numerous papers on "The Trials of Staff-Officers," Mr. X. was compelled to do a good deal of regimental work at night and beneath his own roof. In the first set of quarters occupied by him, at Russell, there was a "linter" on the east side of the cottage, separated from the parlor by the hall-way and comparatively isolated from the "social" side of the premises. Thanks to a six months' campaign in the field, when no returns were made, and during which time a new colonel and a new adjutant had been "sprung" on the regiment, everything in the office was in arrears. The colonel found the command wofully uninstructed in drill and garrison duties, though there was no discount on its work in the field, and he and his new staff-officer were kept mighty busy, especially the latter, in drills and ceremonies of every kind. We were very short of clerks, could get no more without depriving company commanders of theirs, and so Mr. X. tried by hard night-work to make up the deficiency. As he was required to be out at reveille and at work all day, it can readily be seen that only a minimum allowance of sleep was accorded him, and frequently three hours was the utmost he could hope for. Mr. X. knows now that no one man could accomplish what he attempted that year and that he was

an ass to try; but try he did, and one of the prerequisites was a "den" where he could work undisturbed.

We had a charming girl visiting us that winter. All the bachelors at the post were paying her devoted attention. There was not an hour from guard-mounting to midnight that some of them were not infesting the premises, and Mrs. X. not infrequently had to order the laughing crowd out of the house when midnight came, declaring that her friend and guest must be allowed a few hours' rest between visits.

There was a piano in the parlor and a guitar. There was fun in full blast every evening, but the adjutant would come in from tattoo roll-call and then shut himself up in his shop and scratch away at the various books or papers, striving to be oblivious to the merry laughter across the hall. By and by one big fellow, whose detail as post commissary enabled him to "get the bulge," as they expressed it, on the others, came to having the field to himself during the hours when the regiment was absorbed in morning drills, and one day the wife of his bosom demanded of Mr. X., "Well, are you *never* going to express an opinion about the engagement?"

"What engagement?" asked Mr. X., blankly, for every moment of his time had been given to his work, and he had seen nothing going on under his very nose.

"Why, *our* engagement," was madame's reply, the tone whereof fully indicated her proper vexation at the imbecility of her lord.

"I thought that was rather an old story," says Mr. X., haplessly.

"Oh! How can you be so—stupid? Don't you see? Haven't you heard? Is it possible you haven't suspected

——'s engagement? She accepted him four days ago, and they both think it so queer you haven't congratulated them."

"Great Scott! Let me go and do it now;" and Mr. X. makes a rush across the hall and into the parlor and over to the sofa, where sits enthroned a bewitching brunette with sparkling eyes and flushing cheeks and flashing white teeth, who smiles up at him as he says,—

"How blind I've been! My dear girl, you don't know how glad I am to hear it. With all my heart I wish you joy, and—Billy, old man," and here Mr. X. turns on a brother cavalryman and wrings his hand hard, "you're a lucky fellow if there ever was one. Just *don't* I congratulate you!"

But Billy's face is one of gloom, and Mrs. X.'s visage portends a storm. "Why, aren't you the happy man?" blunders Mr. X., in continuation.

"I regret to say I'm not," says Lieutenant Billy, in tones sepulchral, and then Mr. X. is remanded to prison and properly lectured. It seems Billy wanted to be, but wasn't. She was promising to be a sister to him, and expressing the conventional hope that, as Mrs. Somebody Else, she might still number him as one of her dearest friends, when X. appeared, like an old mole just bursting forth from the moist and loamy earth, dazzled and blinded by the sudden sunshine.

But the real happy man was not allowed much happiness, after all, in that garrison. His defrauded friends and comrades made common cause against him. There was a bachelor ranch next door,—a bachelor mess,—whereat "the boys" all congregated right after retreat, and from which he invariably made his escape just as

soon as he could satisfy the demands of hunger, and then his well-known step would be heard on our piazza without, and our bonnie guest would be borne from our own dinner-table to grant her accepted just a moment or two of precious *tête-à-tête* before his troubles would begin. Before the rest of us could finish our coffee, bang would go the gong-bell at the door, and our darky maid would usher in the grinning quartermaster, a most eligible bachelor, and "Good-evening, Mrs. X.; good-evening, Miss Blank," would be his laughing salutation as he entered. "Thought you might be lonely this evening, so I dropped in early. Hello, old man! You here, too? Why, if I'd known *that*, now, I could have gone on to Colonel K——'s. Mr. X. gone over to play whist yet, Mrs. X.?"

"No, he's in the den, but he goes in five minutes. Did you want to see him?" for madame has a soft spot in her heart for the luckless lover, and wants to secure him a moment or two of bliss in answer to his imploring gaze.

"Oh, no—no, just wanted to know, so as to time my visit up there after the card-party gets out of the sitting-room. I can stay a whole half-hour yet."

And he does; and when, at last, he takes his leave he slips into his own abode next door. "Your turn now, Bobby," he says to the nearest youngster, goes on about his other calls, and Bobby trots in to X.'s forthwith, and he spends his half or three-quarters of an hour chatting blithely with Miss Blank, and totally ignoring the black looks and sullen mien of his big comrade.

Then *he* goes, and the third relief, in the person of another sub., comes in; and so they keep it up until X. comes home from the general's whist-table at eleven and

betakes himself to the den for work, and there he finds his cherished friend, the accepted suitor, striding up and down the narrow confines of that apartment, biting his nails in wrath, and blaspheming at the rate of a dollar a second,—if the regulations on that subject were ever enforced. His half a dozen merciless chums have succeeded in making the evening a hell to him, as he doesn't hesitate to say, and even at this late hour in come two more of the gang.

"Saw your lights burning in the parlor, Mrs. X., and thought we'd just drop in to say good-night," they explain. "Why, where's S——?" And S——, in the den with Mr. X., grits his teeth and swears anew. It was all great fun for them, keeping this up night after night, but as the damsel had soon to go eastward, whither her adorer could not then follow, it was no lark for him. Neither did it help the adjutant in his labors.

But even that invaded sanctuary was better than the next. We were "ranked out" of those quarters presently and forced into a set without a "linter," and here Mr. X.'s den was fixed at the rear end of the hall,—a space about eight feet by seven,—and here was the table on which were his books, papers, pens, rulers, etc., and here he strove to do his night-work, only to discover that a desk which is used as the baby's playground by day is but a mess of confusion at other times. Somehow or other there was no such thing as getting the coveted workshops after that. It was worse still when we went on university duty and boarded in two rooms. It did not improve when we took up our abode on the shores of a lovely inland lake, and, having retired from active service, Mr. X. found that his pen was all he had with which to eke

out a scanty income and earn a home for the wife and olive-branches. There were several of the latter now, and dollars flew from his hands faster than he could amass them. For a time there was a nook in the garret, a dark corner far aloft in the big house of an indulgent relation, where X. had a refuge and where he could work uninterruptedly, so long as he could stand the fumes of the kerosene lamp,—there was no other light but a gas-jet in the shop,—and between the gloom and the close atmosphere it wasn't the liveliest place for composition, but it was generally far above the danger of interruption, and that was the main thing for a fellow whose ideas did not flow spontaneously at all, but had to be dragged out by the roots, as it were. It was up in this dark and gloomy, but most acceptable, den that X. wrote and studied, grinding out a big book of some eight hundred pages for an Eastern publisher on some "Famous Battles" of history, and finding some happiness in the ten weeks' wrestle which resulted in the production of "Marion's Faith,"—the first sequel to "The Colonel's Daughter." Then we were able to move into rather pleasanter quarters as a household, though still crowded in the winters, while the summers were spent up under the beautiful bluffs of Lake Pepin, and at last,—at last came the time when the longed-for roost of our own seemed a possibility.

"What makes it loveliest of all," said *placens uxor*, as she glanced about her cozy little parlor and library ("Between the Lines" had furnished our pretty nook "from turret to foundation-stone"), "is that now at last you have your own den shut off from the rest of the world, and there you can work utterly uninterrupted."

It was alluring. It did look plausible. Aside from the deep, deep thanksgiving that filled his heart for such a bright, cheery, homelike nest for the wife and little ones, there was a heart-felt sense of gratitude that here he might be able to delve at the trade which force of circumstances had assigned him, and be free from the score of interruptions that beset him elsewhere. The selected "den" overlooked the children's playground at the back of the house. It also overlooked many of the neighbors' back yards, the tennis court of our small club, the lake-side drive of the metropolis, and beyond, the sparkling, dancing waves of old Michigan. "There's inspiration for you!" was the daily declaration of the lady friends whom Mrs. X. delightedly brought up to show over the premises, and in course of time the test was to be made.

We got into our prized possession simultaneously with a lively tomkitten, whom the children promptly adopted and the servants welcomed as sure to bring luck. We spent a fortnight getting settled, and by the end of that time Mr. X.'s den was indeed a joy to him. The walls were hung with maps of old campaigns, photographs of dozens of fellows of the regiments we had known and served with, trophies from the far frontier, spurs, sabres, field-glasses, belts, the old *aiguillette* and shoulder-knots of the adjutancy. A big flat desk, with abundant drawers and pigeon-holes, was placed where the east light would be at the scribbler's left; the ponderous revolving book-case was at the other hand. Shelves and stands were built on every side for such volumes as were professional or most frequently needed, and then X. was ready to begin at a yarn for a long-suffering publisher, who was

politely but positively upbraiding him for not getting to work before.

"Dunraven Ranch" was the first story attempted, and Mr. X. fondly hoped, and Mrs. X. confidently prophesied, it could be done in a month. "The Deserter" had only taken three weeks. "From the Ranks" was written in four, and that was sufficient, said her ladyship, to prove that the new story could be done easily and readily in just as short a time, now that at last X. had his den.

And this is the way it worked: Breakfast is over on a bright June day. The schools have closed. The children of the neighborhood appear to be congregated in our seventy-five by fifty back yard, and a very pretty and picturesque lot they make. There are over a dozen little maids of every age, from five to fifteen. There are no boys except tiny scamps of three and four summers, X. junior among them. They are playing "puss in the corner," and the game is in full blast. Mr. X. in spirit is away on the Llano Estacado, telling, or trying to tell, of a race with the Rossiter hounds. The fun grows fast and furious in the playground. Some girls cannot laugh without screaming, cannot catch or be caught without ear-piercing shrieks. X. cannot bear to spoil their fun, and cannot work ahead so much as a line within earshot of such a racket. He compromises; gets up and closes the windows and resumes his seat and pen. But he cannot so soon get back to Texas. "Let's see, where were we? 'The stream bent southward just at the point where he had first caught sight of the horseman, and——'"

Rat-tat-tat on the door. "Come in!"

"Oh, Mr. X., the man's here about the carpet!"

"What carpet?"

"I don't know, sir. He says Mrs. X. was at the store yesterday."

"Where's Mrs. X."

"Gone to market. She said she'd be back in ten minutes."

"Then tell him to wait ten minutes."

To the desk again. And back to the banks of the Monee in pursuit of the thread of the yarn. It proves illusive. Row in the back yard. A Babel of childish voices. Lamentations and general excitement. The Abigail from the kitchen vainly endeavors to restore quiet. For a minute X. remains in the Pan-handle of Texas hunting for that thread; but the wails from this particular back yard, in the Cream City, fetch him forthwith. Down goes the pen. Up goes the window. "What's the matter, daughter?"

"Maudie Wilkins threw Birdie Jones's hat over in the next yard, and now she won't go and get it."

"She pulled my doll's shoes off, an' she's got 'em," says the accused Maud, who stoutly declines to come into the garden of our neighbor and recover the vanished hat.

"I didn't," bawls Birdie. If Birdie grows up with that voice, she'll be a joy to her husband, thinks Mr. X. He never had much luck in settling the quarrels of women and children, and the buffets of past experience warn him not to try.

"Evangeline!"—this to the kitchen goddess below, who, like Frank Stockton's Pomona who longed to be called Clare, was ambitious as to her Christian name,

and was probably only Angie originally, but the process of evangelization began when she came to live with us,— "Evangeline, will you kindly step next door and recover that hat, and give Birdie an apple, or a watermelon, something to stop that awful gap."

Evangy vanishes. So does Birdie, howling. The prospect of so tame a recovery of the ravished head-gear is not soothing to her wounded spirit. Her soul's in arms and eager for the humiliation of Maud. She can be traced out across the street, up the walk on the western side, across the place with the lofty name beyond, as in the old days we could follow the "Armenia" miles through the Hudson highlands by the echoing toot of her steam calliope. The children anticipate reprisals from the quarter whither she has gone. Maud scuttles homeward to escape the excoriation that Birdie's mother is said to administer, and presently she comes. There's a ring at the bell, a knock at the den door.

"Mrs. Jones is here, Mr. X., and wants to see you. I told her Mrs. X. was out."

"Did you tell Mrs. Jones I was very busy?" groans X.

"Yes, sir; but she says she must see somebody."

Now, we don't know Mrs. Jones at all except by reputation, which is one reason we know her no better. She is not, so to speak, in our set. She has four children who do not go to school with ours, and who are not congenial playmates. Indeed, some of our little friends who are school-mates of our kids, and who eagerly welcomed us to this charming neighborhood, have received parental injunctions not to play with the Jones girls at any time. But the little Joneses are all-pervading. Despite their unpopularity, they go everywhere, and wher-

ever they go there is sure to be a row. It seems they have few toys or playthings of their own and are possessed of the acquisitive faculty in marked degree. They were prompt to call and welcome us on the day of our arrival, and have been from that time to this the most sociable of our neighbors. Mr. X. has been surprised to find the quartette pulling over the books in the library before breakfast-time on more than one occasion, and pending the appearance of our little people out of doors, the Joneses have not infrequently possessed themselves of the tricycle, bicycle, doll carriages, express wagon, etc., etc., and contented themselves therewith for hours while our lambkins lamented. Stringent measures have resulted in their exclusion from the house when unbidden, but who could single out two or three of a group of children and forbid them the playground?

Yet wheresoever they go there is trouble, and whatsoever may be their own misdeeds, the uproar with which they rush around the block to the maternal arms brings her promptly to the rescue, and the tale of inflicted wrong sends her forthwith to the scene. Mrs. Jones is here to demand satisfaction. And the police patrol is a mile away. Good-by, Dunraven; good-by.

Mr. X. regains his den in half an hour, wilted. But for the coming of Mrs. X. he couldn't have regained it at all. That woman has the soul of a Desaix. She heard the one-sided battle from afar. She marched *au canon* forthwith. Mrs. Jones is in tears and the midst of a terrible tale of her little Birdie's sweet, shy, sensitive spirit that shrivels under harshness or injustice. The child had loved mine so. Here at last she had found playmates who could understand her, sympathize with

her. Mrs. Jones had been so happy in seeing how eagerly her children had rushed forth each morning to spend the day at the X.'s, and now, like all the others, the X.'s too were turning against her precious lambs. Especially the lamb that had thrown herself howling like a fog-horn out of the yard with the doll shoes in her pocket. But that was accidental, as Mrs. Jones triumphantly established after denying their presence there.

The row has cast a damper over the spirits of the children, and a wet blanket over the Llano Estacado. It was a blaze of sunshine there at ten o'clock. Now at 10.40 it seems to be pouring. Mrs. Jones has gone, for she found it more difficult to hammer her views into the head of the lady of the house, but her spirit hovers over the den. Presently up comes Mrs. X. "*She* won't come here again," she says. "Now, what can I do for you down-town?"

"Bring me a bull-dog, the ugliest you can find, and tie him at the front door. Must you go? I've written only ten lines in two hours."

"I've got to. There's that sewing-girl coming to-morrow and the material not yet bought, and the Blakes and Walkers come to tea to-night and I haven't a thing. I'll give orders you are not to be disturbed for anything." And the lady of the house departs in that serene confidence which so many housewives seem to have when new at the business, that all that is necessary is to order and folks obey. She is gone but ten minutes, and X. is traveling back to Texas slowly. The children are again at their play, though less noisily, and X. ventures to leave his window up again. A hand-organ is heard in the distance. Blessed relief. "Money for the monkey?

Yes, my child, gladly. Here's a whole dime. Keep him and the crowd a block away as long as you can." Ring at the bell; knock at the den door. Evangeline with a telegram:

"Sorry to disturb you, but the boy says 'it's collect.'"

"It isn't. It's paid. He's a young swindler. Tell him so."

The dispatch is from publishers: "Anxiously awaiting manuscript. When will it be here?"

Back comes Evangeline. "It's the answer to be paid; and he wants car-fare for coming so far up-town."

"He will spend it in peanuts and chewing-gum. He would never ride. He couldn't stop and play marbles if he did. It is paying a premium on dawdling; but here goes. Give him a dime, and shut the door."

Back in two minutes. "Is there no answer? Manager said not to come back without it." What answer can I send? Ten lines in two hours. More. It's eleven o'clock. There go the cathedral bells now. "When will the manuscript get there? I don't know. At this rate, never. Tell him so. Stay! Tell him two o'clock next spring, that's as definite as I can make it. And shut the door."

Back to the valley of the Monee at last. The cloud-shadows are sailing over the pampas. The cattle far towards the horizon are browsing slowly down to water. The Indian ponies on the slope beyond the Cheyenne village are sleepily switching at the flies that swarm in myriads about them. The——

"Ow-w-w—Wa-a-a-h. O-eee—Go *way!* Wa-a-a-h. O-hoo-oo—I *won't! Wa-a-a-a-h!!*"

Down-stairs, three at a jump. It's the voice of my

little Benjamin, the lamb of the flock, my baby boy. He comes toddling through to the back yard, surrounded by a swarm of sisters, cousins, friends, all sympathetic, all soothing, all voluble in explanation, all unavailing.

"What's the matter, my precious little man. Come right to dad and tell him."

"I want *ma-am*ma. That n-na-asty old Rover f-frowed me in the mud. Wa-a-a-h!"

Rover is our neighbor's dog, big and playful, devoted to my son and heir. It takes time, much time, to console the little man and more to repair damages. It is 11.30 when X. gets back to "Dunraven." It is 11.35 when a note is handed in.

"DEAR CAPTAIN X.,—

"We have a little fancy-dress party to-night, and my cousin, Mr. H——, of Chicago, has unexpectedly arrived, and, as luck would have it, without a costume of any kind. He is just about your size, and I told him I knew you would be only too glad to let me have for him the uniform you lent Harry for the theatricals last year. We will take the best of care of it, and be so much obliged. Please send it by bearer.

"Yours sincerely,

"E. V. B. B——.

"P.S.—Oh, yes, and please send the helmet with the lovely plume, and the high boots, and the sword. Also the gauntlets.

"P.S.—And *would* you mind letting us have the white summer dress, if not too much trouble?"

Lord no! It's no trouble at all. Some of the traps are up-stairs in the garret, some down in the cellar. Can't the boy come this afternoon when Mrs. X. is home? No. He is only a "lightning delivery" boy, and once is enough. It is 12.30 by the time X. roots these things out, and he has just packed them, in one

shape or other, into the wagon when the three-quarter strikes, and Evangeline meets him,—consternation in her eye.

"Mr. X.! Didn't Mrs. X. order whitefish for tea to-night? They've sent up a big trout."

"Whitefish, of course. Go over to the Hartwell's with my compliments, and ask if you can telephone to the fish-market to send for this trout at once. We don't want it. We must have whitefish. And I must get back to my work."

Again at the den. Again screams of dismay from the children. No Evangeline to answer their frantic cries. My eldest daughter flies up the stairs.

"What is it, my Brownie?"

"Oh, papa! Could you come to the cellar? Prince Purr-Purr has got his head caught in an empty tomato-can and can't get it out, and he's nearly wild."

So am I; but I fly to the rescue of Prince Purr-Purr, —who is the household cat and pet. The process of extrication is not pleasant for Purr-Purr, and he makes it lively for me. I am tempted to leave him caught as he is, but the entreaties of the children prevail. His claws have gashed one hand and added to the excoriations on my temper. It is after one when I get to the desk. Meantime, Evangeline has returned with the information that she cannot get the fishmonger. It is also time for the children's luncheon. We dine—or rather tea—late to-day, for friends are coming to try Lake Superior whitefish, and the villain has sent us trout. X. gives up. The manuscripts are pitched into the bottom drawer, and a street-car takes him down-town. "Simply a mistake on the boy's part," says the imperturbable

vender of fish, poultry, and game. He has left your whitefish at the Comstocks, and their trout with you. Why didn't you telephone?"

"Couldn't get you, was Central's explanation. Will you kindly bless that boy for me?" And X. goes home, ruffled in spirit and sore athirst and an hungered. Mrs. X. is exhibiting the den to a lady friend as he returns,—all her lady friends, at one time or other, seem to have come to see the house.

"Oh, Captain X.," says the enthusiastic visitor, "I've just been telling Mrs. X. how lovely it all is; but this—*this* is perfectly charming. What inspiration you must find here,—the lovely rippling waters, the gleeful shouts of the children, the——"

But Mrs. X. sees that the other side is uppermost in her husband's mind just now, and laughingly interposes,—

"Why don't you get a telephone, and have peace?" she says, when the story of the morning is told. "You wouldn't have had to go at all."

Now, it was one of Mr. X.'s stipulations that we shouldn't have a telephone when we got the little home. —He had had some experiences with it.—But we've got one now. It isn't in the den, but I hear it the Lord only knows how many times a day. It is of no earthly use to me, for the electric cars came in with it, and whenever I want anybody down-town, the only way I can get them, as a rule, is by the street-car. On the other hand, nobody seems to have any difficulty in getting us,—especially those who don't want us at all. A dozen times a day am I summoned to the instrument by its sharp ring.

"Hello!"

"Hello! Is that Saint Mary's?"

"No saint at all. It's Captain X."

"Oh (disgustedly), I didn't want *you*. Central! Ce-e-e-ntral! Can't you get me St. Mary's?" and the shrill, feminine voice holds the line.

X. was hard at work and behind time, as usual, the other day, when there came a vigorous ring. It was the steward of the club who called.

"Captain X., Colonel Bbbbleton wants particularly to see you, and——"

"Colonel who?"

"Colonel Bbbbleton, from Chicago."

"Spell it."

"I can't."

"Ask him to come to the instrument."

"He isn't here. He's just gone out. Says he'll be back in half an hour, but wants particularly to see you."

Now, X. had just missed one old chum who was passing through town. He had heard from another back number of a retired soldier, like himself, that a distinguished member of the division commander's staff was likely to come to town in the course of the month, and was eager to meet him, and so had dropped him a line to be sure and call him up at the club when he arrived. X. dropped his work, boarded a car, and shot downtown. Colonel Bbbbleton hadn't returned, said the steward, but he was so particularly anxious to see Mr. X. that he had telephoned. A full hour did X. wait, and then the gentleman came,—a total stranger.

"Oh! Is this Captain X.? I am Colonel B——, of the Mulligan Mound Military Academy, Illinois. I pro-

pose bringing my cadets up here for a parade next week, and I had heard of you as one of the military men hereabouts, and thought you might be able to tell me where I'd find a drummer who wouldn't charge me too much."

Mr. X. told him, and went back to his den, wondering what some colonels were made of.

"O for a lodge in some vast wilderness!" It took four months instead of four weeks to finish "Dunraven," and it well-nigh finished the writer. But that was something our readers could perhaps have borne with equanimity.

HOW WE ELECTED THE MAYOR OF OGLETHORPE.

NEVER mind the real name of the place; it is just possible that the State Central Committee might not care to have the story brought home to them, even after the lapse of so many years. They certainly were not overanxious to have it spread broadcast throughout the land at the time, although the individual members derived no end of comfort from the incident, and there was much poking of one another in the ribs and exploding into guffaws of delighted laughter, and sudden cessation thereof and straightening of faces into an expression of preternatural gravity and innocence when certain of the opposition happened to come around the corner. It was long after the trying days of the reconstruction period, and the army had been relieved from its detested duty of "supervising" elections in the Sunny South; but it was before the resumption of Democratic supremacy throughout the cotton-growing States, and when in some, even many, parishes or counties the colored voters still outnumbered the whites as many as twenty to one, and the nominees of the lately-enfranchised were cock-sure of election, provided their constituents exercised the right of suffrage. There were districts in the South where the so-called shot-gun policy had dissuaded many darkies from attendance at the polls. There were towns and

cities where blacks and whites were nearly balanced in point of numbers, and where, as a consequence, they were almost solidly arrayed one against the other; and the question at issue was not whether a Republican or a Democrat would be chosen, but whether the white or the black man was to "rule the roast" in that community.

And this was practically the situation at Oglethorpe in the lovely autumn of 188–. Counting in the suburbs of Congo Creek and Ashantiville, the population of the old Southern city was not far from sixty thousand. Leaving out these charming settlements, the number of souls in the city proper was probably forty-five thousand, with the preponderance in favor of the whites; but, leaving out the city proper and counting only the suburbs, no whites could be found among the residents, except within the walls of the lunatic asylum, which stood close by the river-bank and within the confines of Ashantiville, yet somewhat removed from touch with its thronging hovels. Possibly it was a shrewd appreciation of the political opportunities thus presented which had prompted the Legislature, in the days of what the local press termed "Senegambian supremacy," to decree that these two suburban villages, with their teeming, moss-grown old quarters, should be attached to the city proper; not that any perceptible increase in the municipal revenue would result thereby (indeed, the opposite effect was noted from the start), but that the intelligence and patriotism of Congo Creek and Ashantiville might be brought to bear upon all important questions arising in the town, especially in the biennial election of mayor and councilmen.

Little by little as the personal complexion of the Legislature had changed from the all-pervading black of the

early '70's to the general Caucasian white of the early '80's, so, too, had the political hue undergone transformation from radical Republicanism to a very evenly mottled House, and a Senate in which the Caucasian rejoiced in a majority of two. Those modern distractions of Northern politics embraced under the heads of Labor and Prohibition parties were unknown to Oglethorpe. There were but two factions in the field, and when the Democratic Central Committee began to look the ground over and prepare for the fall elections of 188–, hope died in their bosoms, for the metropolis of their fertile State seemed to be more densely populated with presumable Republicans than at any time in its previous history. It was to be a most important election for Oglethorpe. The city credit had suffered severely in the past. The "carpet-bag" mayors and councilmen had run things to suit themselves, greatly to the detriment of the merchants, property-owners, and responsible citizens of the once beautiful and attractive town. Matters had been going from bad to worse, and at last the representative men of the neighborhood arose in their might and declared that now the time had come to call a halt. The Legislature could not be induced, as yet, to undo the old act and divest Oglethorpe of those parasitical suburbs. Indeed, there was ground for the belief that certain legislators, whose seats were insecure, were conniving at an active scheme of colonization, and that swarms of negroes who had no earthly chance of voting across the borders of "a remarkably neighboring State," where the shot-gun policy obtained in full force, were now descending upon Congo Creek and Ashantiville, and who the dickens could distinguish them, either in feature or statement,

from the duly-qualified electors of the Oglethorpe district? Active canvassers assured the Democratic Central Committee that the adult male population of the outskirts had nearly doubled in three weeks. The day of registration had come, but that of redemption looked farther off than ever. One of the most irreclaimable scalawags on earth had been nominated by acclamation as the candidate of the "carpet-bag" party for mayor, and a dozen lively Ethiopians had been selected to run for the common council. On the other hand, the white citizens, who were permanent residents, had, irrespective of party, named good old Judge Fournier as their standard-bearer, and had issued a fervent appeal to all good men, white or black, to vote for this incorruptible gentleman and statesman, and to down the Hebrew importation who had bought, as was well known, the nomination of the convention.

But if the committee felt blue and discouraged before the completion of the registration, they were well-nigh hopeless after it. Congo Creek, Ashantiville, and a few colored districts in town showed an increase of nearly two thousand duly-qualified electors over the rolls of two years back, and every mother's son of them was ready to swear he had lived there over eighteen months and proposed to make Oglethorpe his home. Under existing laws the Democrats on the board of registration had to content themselves with verbal expressions of doubt and derision: they could not interfere.

"No, suh," said Major Carter, or, as he called himself, "Cyahtah," one of the leading Democrats on the board, "it's no use kicking against the pricks. We can't prove what we believe, and the way things look now

these confounded niggahs will outvote us about two to one in all but four wards, and the judge will be swamped. I tell you, gentlemen, if that infernal Jew is elected mayor of this city I'm going to quit."

"Ain't there no way of persuading them to vote the right way or else have business elsewhere, like they do over across the line?" asked Captain Beaufort, who preferred the vernacular of his people to the King's English of any other section; and he jerked his head backward to indicate that he meant the "remarkably neighboring State" aforementioned.

"N-no, suh; we tried something of that kind six years ago, and got the federal government down on us in less'n no time. N-no, suh; we can't afford anything like intimidation. And no power on earth can prevail with those benighted creatures against the statements of such infernal scalawags as are their political file-leaders."

"Well, can't they be bought?—the leaders, I mean?"

"Dassent try it, suh. You see you have to buy up the whole gang, for if you leave one out he peaches on the others, and then the whole election is thrown out. There ain't money enough in sight to buy more than a dozen of them, and that wouldn't do at all. N-no, suh, we can't beat and we can't bribe; I'm blessed if I know what we can do."

"Registration all perfectly regular?"

"Yes, suh. And every niggah in Oglethorpe and a whole raft from outside have got their registration papers, while some of our people wouldn't register at all. Said 'twas no earthly use, and I reckon they're pretty near right."

Mr. Alfred Forno, a high-bred, handsome young fellow

of twenty-six or seven, who had sat a silent listener, put forth his hand at this juncture, took up one of the registration blanks from a pile lying on the table, and curiously studied it, whistling softly to himself as he did so. It was a stiff card about four by two inches in size and bore a printed legend to the effect that the bearer, "....., of number ....., ... street, age ..... years ..... months, was duly registered at the office of the ..... precinct, ... ward of the city of Oglethorpe, on the ..... day of October, and will be entitled to vote at the polling place of said precinct, said ward, on Tuesday, November 3, 188....., on personal presentation of this certificate."

Mr. Forno, still softly whistling, turned this card over and over in his long slender fingers, gazing dreamily through the smoke of his cigarette at a highly-colored poster on the opposite wall. Finally, he arose and began more attentively to study the poster, carelessly tossing the blank registration card back upon the table. Major Carter and his friend, the captain, meantime continued their despondent chat. After a while, Mr. Forno turned.

"Every niggah got one of these hyuh things?" he queried.

"Every adult male and not a few legal infants, suh," was the answer. "But who could swear to a niggah's age? I reckon there's a raft of boys not more'n eighteen that are entitled to vote by the fiat of that board" (he called it *bode*, but the reader might not know what on earth he meant). "Every man who votes has to hand in his registration certificate when he tenders his ballot; that's our law over hyuh. How is it in Alabama?"

"Well-l, we haven't got quite so methodical as yet," answered Mr. Forno, with a quiet smile. "Our system is simpler and somewhat more elastic. Now you've got just three weeks in which to meet this situation, as I understand it. Can't you see any way out of the trouble?"

"Not a vestige of a show, suh. Why? Do you?" And Carter looked up with sudden hope and interest; so did Beaufort; so did one or two gentlemen who had been silent, but despondent, listeners. They all knew Forno. He was already a distinguished man in the legal profession, and his fame had carried him on many a mission beyond the borders of his own State.

"Possibly," he answered.

"No intimidation; no hoodoo business; no bribery and corruption; all fair and above-board, Fawno?"

"Perfectly."

"Well, I just tell you, suh, that Oglethorpe will build a monument in your honor if you'll just show us how to get out of this fix."

"What majority does the registration indicate as probable?"

"Not a head less than twenty-four hundred,—all niggahs, suh, with more coming."

"Well, now, does every one of these hyuh fellows hold his own registration certificate,—this sort of thing, I mean?" And Mr. Forno picked up the card again. "Or are they held by the ward bosses?"

"There are two or three precincts where the bosses have them, out there in 'Shantyville and Congo particularly; but we bluffed that game in town. Out there of cose there's no use trying. The cyahpet-bag bosses just

run things to suit themselves. They march their mokes up to the polls in single file and give each man his ticket and his cyahd as it comes his tuhn to vote. No, suh; hyuh in town we insisted that the cyahd should be handed to the ownah and nobody else."

Mr. Forno whistled softly to himself a moment.

"What's to prevent one of those bosses getting a winning ticket in the Louisiana lottery next week, and being given money enough to go to N'yohleans to collect?"

"Well, how is that going to help?"

"In this way: he won't be able to collect; he won't have money to get back with, and you can start some likely niggahs from town up to Congo and 'Shantiville with the story that he was bought up, certificates and all, and now they wouldn't be able to vote unless they could get their papers back from the other bosses. It would go like wildfire. Everybody knows they're the most credulous people on the face of the globe."

"But it seems to me, Mr. Fawno, 'twould be easier to get those certificates away from the bosses, if that's your game, than it would be to induce each individual coon to lose his."

"That depends, major, on how much campaign fund you've got, or can raise. How much have you?"

"Well, we can easily make it five thousand for a sure thing, but at this moment we haven't more than two thousand left."

"Then take my advice. Invest fifty dollars, or a little more, perhaps, in sending one of those Congo bosses off to N'yohleans to collect a five-thousand-dollar prize. Start the suburbs, in about ten days or so, on a raid

upon the other bosses to get personal possession of their certificates. They're all regularly stamped and numbered and have corresponding stubs in the registration office books, haven't they?"

"Yes, suh, of cose."

"All right, then. You just see that as much as possible every colored voter in Oglethorpe has his own cyahd by the 25th of this month; and have, say, four thousand dollars ready. It won't take that much, probably, but I want to be sure of being able to carry out my promise. And I'll bet you the best dinner Victor can lay out next Mardi Gras—a dinner for ten—that Judge Fournier is elected."

"Done, suh! done! and make it for fifteen, and I'll be overjoyed to lose," exclaimed Major Carter, excitedly. "But, you must excuse me now, Mr. Fawno; I'm blessed if I can see how you'll do it,—that is, awnestly."

"I give you my word, major, that there will be no intimidation, no influence brought to bear other than the personal predilection of the citizen of African descent. He shall be a free agent in the matter. Is it a bet?"

"Of cose it is, suh, of cose it is; anything you say."

And that night, having finished his business in Oglethorpe, Mr. Forno journeyed back to Montgomery.

Somewhere about the middle of the next week the Hon. Alphonse Beaudet, recently member of the Legislature for the third assembly district in Oglethorpe, a colored gentleman of considerable pretensions as an orator and moderate ability as a barber, a leader among his kind, and the holder of some four hundred registration certificates, suddenly left Oglethorpe. Indeed, it

may be said, he secretly left, for Mr. Beaudet was a man of refined, if not extravagant, tastes. He had been a body-servant in the halcyon days of Southern supremacy in Congress before the war; had become imbued with many of the traits and fancies of his master; and his fondness for purple, fine linen, and the flesh-pots of Egypt was accompanied by a lack of collateral with which to defray expenses. In fact, despite Mr. Beaudet's personal, professional, and oratorical graces, he was a marked man in the community, so much so that had it been known that he contemplated removal, even temporarily, from the limits of Oglethorpe the resultant *ne exeats* would have made up in numbers and energy all they might lack of legal existence. There was not a colored shopkeeper, there were few tailors, hatters, shoemakers, haberdashers, whose books were not graced by the accounts of the Hon. Mr. Beaudet when he was most prominent and looked upon as a permanency in the Legislature of the State of his nativity. But politics has its ups and downs like everything else, and Beaudet had no more successfully "called the turn" in 188– than he had at faro the previous year. "Craps" he never descended to until after the reverses to which allusion has been made; "craps" and the barber-shop came in together; "craps" and the Louisiana lottery swallowed the earnings of the shop, which were fair,—much fairer than the games he played. Beaudet was on his last legs financially and politically, when one afternoon there strolled in a Mr. Sullivan, a young Irishman well known in convivial and political circles; and Mr. Sullivan ostensibly came for a shave. Casually, however, he drew forth and began studying a slip on which was printed what purported to

be the winning numbers of the monthly drawing of the Louisiana lottery. This instantly attracted the operator's attention.

"Draw anything, suh?" queried the orator barber, in his blandest manner.

"No; d—n it! Beaudet, I never do. I've been buying for years,—never pulled a cent yet. I had a chance, too. Old Sweeny down here tells me he had two of the winning numbers in his shop and sold 'em both. The lists have just reached him; this is one of 'em. One ticket he sold drew five thousand dollars, the other an approximation prize. He can't for the life of him think who bought 'em, and he's trying hard to get hold of 'em now so's to buy 'em back, you know, before the fellow finds out what a prize he holds."

"What number won the five thousand dollars?" asked Beaudet, with trembling lips.

"No. 43,787," answered Sullivan, referring to his list. "D—n it, man! Look out, you'll cut me!"

"My Lawd! Mr. Sullivan, I beg pardon, suh,—it's, it's only a scratch. My Lawd! Y-you sure 'bout that number? Let me just look."

"Sure? Course I am! Why, you lucky dog! have you got that number? Sh! Don't let a soul know, Beaudet, for they'll be down on you in a minute. Here! don't, don't sell it at a discount here. You take my advice; you go right on to Orleans and collect it."

"My God, suh! I—I—I'd just like to go, but I ain't got a cent, Mr. Sullivan,—not a cent, suh! I'd—I'd be willing to pay mighty handsome for just enough money to take me there." And Beaudet looked appealingly in his customer's face, while big drops of sweat started out

on his yellow-brown forehead. "Hyuh, suh, hyuh's my ticket. Ain't that the number?"

"Right enough, Beaudet! Gad, sir, you ought to make sure of that! 'Pon my word, I've a good mind to——"

"Oh, if you only would, Mr. Sullivan, I—I—I'd do most anything for you."

"Well, you'd have to sneak off, Beaudet. Those creditors of yours are legion. If they found out that you'd won a prize they'd suck you dry. You've just got to gather it in, bank it over there or at Mobile, then come back here without a word to anybody, pay off each man so much and promise the rest. Why, it would set you all right again, wouldn't it? Er—when could you go?"

"Go to-night, fust train, suh, if I only had thirty or forty dollars, enough to take me on to N'yohleans. I'd pay it right back, Mr. Sullivan, 'deed I would, and more too; I'd give a hundred for fifty."

"Pshaw! I'm no Jew. You're a pretty decent sort of a nigger, Beaudet, if you'd only let politics alone. Now, if you'll swear not to tell a soul that you are going, I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll have a ticket to New Orleans all ready for you at the depot at eight to-night and ten dollars for expenses. It won't do for you to buy the ticket; that would give you dead away, see? Don't take any baggage. Better leave your watch here, too. Perhaps I ought to have that,—I need security of some kind in case of an accident to you."

And Beaudet only too eagerly assented to everything. That night he was whirling away over the rice-fields, too excited to sleep.

A week, ten days, passed by. Beaudet failed to return, and all manner of stories were in circulation in the suburbs. Fiery meetings were being held by the negroes, and they were making furious demands upon the bosses for personal possession of their registration cards. Matters came to a climax on Sunday, the 25th of October. That night Major Carter wired Mr. Forno, at Montgomery, that the voters of Ashantiville and Congo had overwhelmed the bosses and obtained their cards. "Four thousand ready" was the significant close of the dispatch.

Meantime, Mr. Forno had not been idle. A big "tent show" had been "marching through Georgia" in September, and then, having exhibited in Alabama, and being billed at Augusta, was bound thence to Aiken, Lexington, Columbia, Spartanburgh, etc. Advance agents were already preparing to "paper" the rural districts adjoining those lovely old Southern towns, when they were called off by telegraph and ordered to concentrate forthwith at Oglethorpe. All Tuesday night the paste-brushes were flying, and on Wednesday morning Oglethorpe—suburbs and all—was ablaze with highly-colored posters, big as a barn-door, full of illustrations of acrobats, ground and lofty tumbling, magnificent feats of horsemanship, daring trapeze acts, bewilderingly beautiful equestriennes, georgeous cream-colored chargers, trick ponies and mules by the dozen, and—O joy to the colored heart!—a big brass band and three talented clowns. All Wednesday, all Thursday, all Friday, all impatience the thronging colored colonies of Oglethorpe flocked about these posters, with bulging, wistful eyes and watering mouths. "Two grand performances only,

to be preceded by a street procession Saturday morning. Two grand performances Saturday afternoon and evening. Admission for adults, with reserved seats, one dollar. General admission, seventy-five cents. Children, fifty cents."

"The management, yielding to the solicitation of prominent citizens of Oglethorpe, has at great expense cancelled its dates in the interior in order that it may present to its host of friends in the metropolis of the Southeastern States its coruscation of new, daring, bewildering stars now embraced in the catalogue of its unparalleled attractions. But in view of the heavy cost involved in so sudden a change of plans, the management is compelled to raise, *for this occasion only*, the scale of prices. Elegant and commodious accommodations will be provided for all, but the customary twenty-five-cent admission, hitherto accorded the colored populace, is reluctantly withdrawn."

As not one darky in a dozen among the inhabitants of Congo and Ashantiville had so much as a quarter, this really made little difference. What did make it hard was the fact that while he might possibly earn a quarter 'twixt now and Saturday, it was only by extra hard work that he could hope to get seventy-five cents, and extra hard work was something not to be thought of. Then, too, what good was a circus without a quarter for whisky and "goobers"? It was hard lines on the colored folks, and their orators made the most of it in the big meetings held Wednesday and Thursday nights. Here was a manifest effort to deprive the poor colored man of his rights. Here was outrageous oppression and wrong on the part of the whites. Things looked

almost like a riot, especially when it began to be spread abroad among the colored folks that never, never had there been seen such a circus in the South. It was the finest thing going. All day they swarmed in front of the blazing posters. All Friday night hundreds of men, women, and children hung about the big square while the tents were being pitched and the wagons came trundling in; and then, when Saturday morning dawned, Congo Creek and Ashantiville streamed into the broad thoroughfares of the city. During the parade the band, in its lofty gilded chariot, was surrounded by a thousand enthusiastic blacks; the banquette was jammed with eager black faces, with shining white teeth. The procession was the finest ever seen of the kind in Oglethorpe, and there was not a moke in all the metropolis who wouldn't have bartered his pet hoodoo charm for a ticket, when a strange rumor began to fly from lip to lip, —a new announcement.

"The management, unwilling to deprive so large and intelligent a body of citizens of the opportunity of witnessing this transcendently beautiful performance, has, at the last moment, decided to place on sale single tickets admitting one colored gentleman and lady at the greatly reduced price of one dollar,—a concession not accorded to any citizens except those of color. Gentlemanly agents will immediately appear upon the streets to personally see to it that our colored friends have every opportunity of purchasing."

Fifteen minutes later a still wilder rumor was afloat, and Congo Creek and Ashantiville were racing up one another's heels in frantic haste to reach those agents. "*Any gentleman temporarily out of funds will be provided*

with one of these tickets on depositing as security his registration card."

Few white folks appeared at those magnificent performances either Saturday afternoon or evening. They couldn't get within a hundred yards of the entrance if they tried; but they didn't try. Congo Creek, Ashantiville, and the colored precincts of Oglethorpe were on the ground in overwhelming numbers. The big tent could hardly hold the solid masses of dusky humanity. The performances went off with much *éclat.* The throng slowly drifted forth as the last act was finished and the canvas began to be lowered over their very heads; and while the circus men packed their wagons and "folded their tents like the Arabs," the management slid over to the Jasper House, where Major Carter and a friend or two were sipping Clicquot in a private room. Two satchels of dingy, malodorous, but valuable registration cards were dumped upon a table and gingerly counted. Two fat wads of greenbacks were popped into those bags in their stead. The management drank to the success of the State Central Committee, and, slyly winking, departed.

There was frantic raving among the orators of Ashantiville at the meetings of Sunday and Monday nights, in which Mr. Beaudet, just back from a freight-car trip from New Orleans, took prominent part. And when the polls were opened Tuesday at sunrise, the inspectors of election sorrowfully shook their heads when man after man poked an anxious black face into the window, protesting he "done lost his cyahd" and wanted to vote all the same. The books, he pleaded, proved that he was registered. It was all useless. It

might be allowed, said the inspectors, "if it weren't for the law."

Judge Fournier was triumphantly chosen by a majority of three thousand over his Hebrew competitor, and at Major Carter's dinner at Victor's next Mardi Gras there was a shout of laughter when the story was told of "How we elected the Mayor of Oglethorpe."

THE END.

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